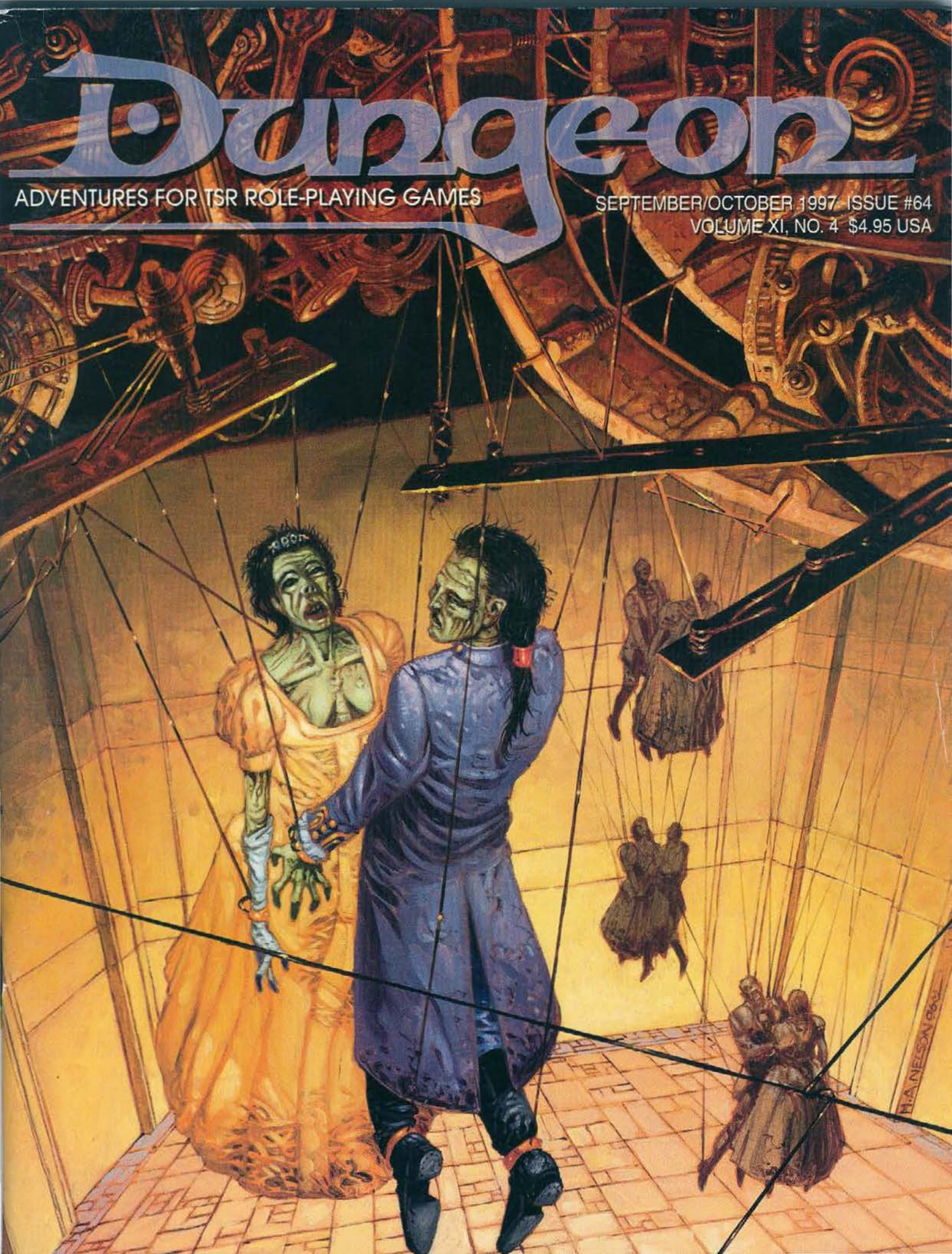
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Dungeon®

ADVENTURES FOR TSR ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1997
ISSUE #64

In a Wonderland they lie,
Dreaming as the days go by,
Dreaming as the summers die.

Ever drifting down the stream—
Lingering in the golden gleam—
Life, what is it but a dream?

— Lewis Carroll
Through the Looking Glass

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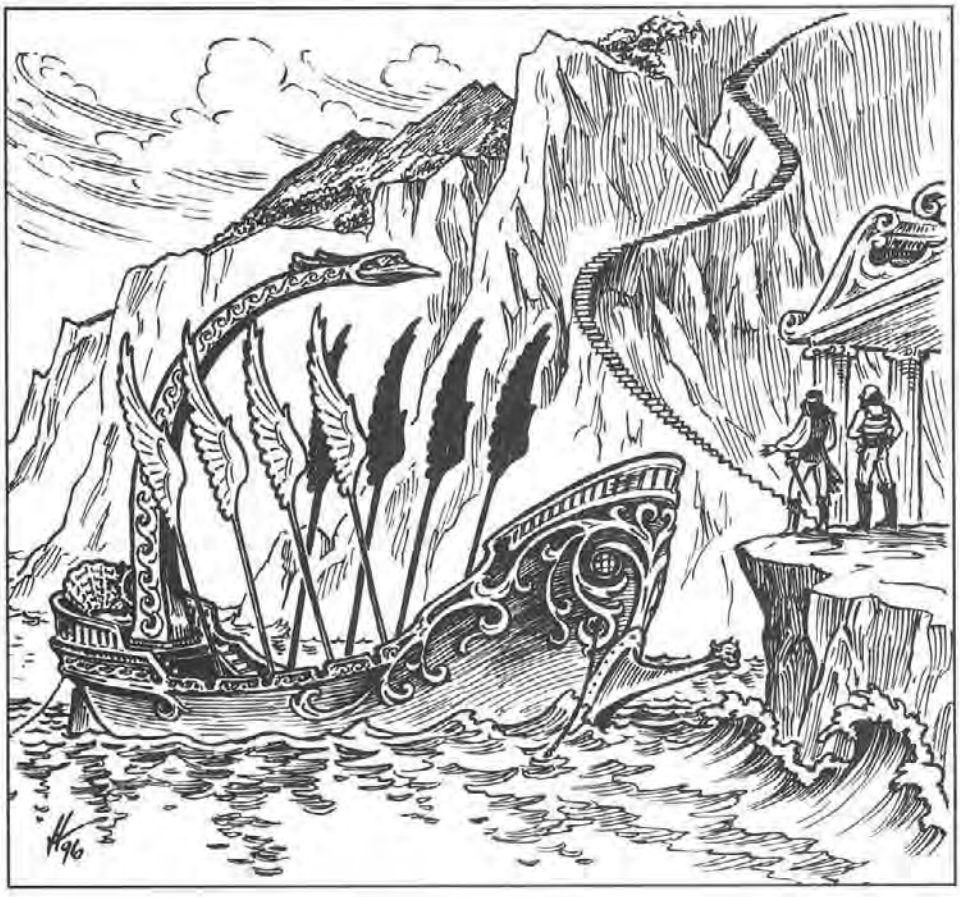


GROTTO OF THE QUEEN

BY PAUL AND SHARI CULOTTA

She's expecting you

Artwork by Valerie Valusek
Cartography by Michael Scott

For a few years, Paul and Shari worked on separate seafaring adventures, but both had problems. Then they put their heads together, consolidated the best parts of each, and came up with this challenging scenario.

"Grotto of the Queen" is an AD&D® FORGOTTEN REALMS® adventure for 4–6 PCs of levels 6–9 (about 38 total levels). A well-balanced party of good-aligned characters works best. The PCs should be well equipped with magical items, and they may find parts of this adventure easier if they have magical means to breathe underwater. PCs who are Harpers determined to take care of the evil beings that plague the Realms will probably find this adventure a rewarding experience.

The adventure takes place along the Sword Coast in Faerûn but it can be adapted to other game worlds by placing the adversaries and their lair along any sea coast. DMs who set the adventure in the FORGOTTEN REALMS may wish to review pertinent sections regarding the village of Lathtarl's Lantern in *Volo's Guide to the Sword Coast* and the deity Umberlee in *Forgotten Realms Adventures* and *Faiths and Avatars*. The FORGOTTEN REALMS boxed set may be consulted for more information about the people of Lantan.

Beginning the Adventure

The plot of this adventure assumes that the characters are hired by an envoy from the island nation of Lantan to recover a missing magical vessel. The vessel is in the possession of a temple of Umberlee, the evil sea goddess of the Realms. What is unknown to the PCs and the Lantan representative is that their plans have been discovered and the Temple has been warned.

Unknown to the Lantanna, the PCs, and the Temple followers, the rulers of Baldur's Gate are fed up with this same Temple of Umberlee, and they have sent a force from the Company of the Flaming Fist (an elite adventuring company) to destroy it. Unfortunately for the Flaming Fists, they are nearly wiped out themselves when they walk right into the ambush meant for the PCs.

How did the Temple know that the PCs were coming in the first place? The DM has several options to tailor the adventure to suit his campaign. First, the text assumes that the campaign

involves a nemesis NPC, someone whom the PCs have encountered before and who is always one step ahead of them. The sidebar of the villain Platonus serves as a template for this nemesis, but the DM is encouraged to use an NPC that already exists in his campaign. If that NPC does not have the sorcerous powers that Platonus possesses, perhaps Platonus can be one of his lieutenants.

Platonus covertly manipulates the Lantan envoy into hiring the PCs. While invisible, he listens in on the PCs' plans, *teleports* to the Temple, and warns the clerics of Umberlee. Platonus is not a worshipper or agent of Umberlee's temple; he simply wants the PCs to take the job so he can manipulate Umberlee's clerics into ambushing them.

If the campaign does not have a nemesis, the DM can assume that the Temple of Umberlee has many spies throughout the Realms, and Platonus is one of them. He happens to be keeping tabs on the Lantan envoy and overhears the arrangements with the PCs. Again, he *teleports* to the Temple and warns the clerics. In this instance, Platonus does not manipulate anyone; he is merely a good spy doing his job by discovering a plot against the Temple and reporting it.

A third option is a scenario where PCs are commissioned not by the Lantanna, but by the Harpers. This secret organization is concerned with the evil Temple possessing the Lantanna's magical vessel and they want it off the high seas. This works well in a campaign where the PCs are Harper agents (See *Code of the Harpers*). In this instance, the DM can ignore the Lantanna NPCs and their vessel and have the PCs go to Lathtarl's Lantern on another vessel or by land. In this case, Platonus can be a spy for the Temple or a nemesis NPC who manipulates the Harpers to commission the PCs (assuming the PCs are not Harpers in the first place).

In any plot variation used by the DM, the result is the same: Platonus (or some other villain selected by the DM) is invisible and present when the PCs are hired. Once he learns their plans, he *teleports* to the Temple and warns the clerics, who set an ambush. The Red Shields adventuring company walks into the ambush first, just before the PCs arrive. The PCs then have only a few hours to get into the Temple and take its occupants by surprise. Otherwise the clerics learn from the captured Red Shields members that two adventuring companies were headed their way, and they reset their ambush. The best result is for the PCs to defeat the clerics of Umberlee and their allies while their guard is down, rescue the survivors of the Red Shields, and recover the magical boat, *Gond's Pride*.

Adventure Background

The lawless Sword Coast of western Faerûn harbors many unsavory areas, and not the least among them is Lathtarl's Lantern, a small out-of-the way fishing village close to the river known as the Winding Water. It was founded long ago by a crippled pirate who lured unsuspecting ships close to shore by lighting lanterns along the coast to make unwary mariners think that they had come to the larger port of Baldur's Gate, which is farther south. Once close to shore, pirates in small crafts would take the vessel and its precious cargo. Lathtarl's Lantern also gained a reputation for being a transfer point for slaves and other illegal cargo.

After numerous Waterdhavian and Amnish threats to burn the village down, the pirates ceased their blatant lawlessness and became much more discreet. Today Lathtarl's Lantern appears to be a sleepy fishing village with one inn, but it is still a gathering place for pirates, outlaws, and rogues.

Just north of town within the rocky sea cliffs is a temple known as the Grotto of the Queen. This worship place is dedicated to Umberlee, an evil sea goddess of the Realms. It is here that pirates and local sailors visit and make substantial offerings to her, praying for fair winds and weather.

Several months ago, a gang of pirates presented a unique gift to this temple: a strange yellow boat fitted with oars fashioned like bird wings and a hollow arch that rose from the back of the boat to the center. They had found it floating aimlessly on the sea with only a dead crew member on board.

Several *speak with dead* spells revealed that the dead sailor was the pilot of the boat. The vessel, *Gond's Pride*, was from the island nation of Lantan. When it was caught in a storm, the other crew members were washed overboard, and the pilot was impaled on a broken oar.

The Temple clerics learned that the boat had several magical properties (including the ability to move underwater), and they used it for defense against sea attacks. The clerics crewed the vessel with skeletons and zombies of sacrificial victims and fitted it with a ram. On two occasions it has been used to drive off seaborne raiders, one a pirate ship and the other a warship.

Stories of this underwater menace soon made their way through ports from Neverwinter to Calimshan, and eventually they were heard by someone from Lantan. After reviewing all the stories, the ruling council of this technologically advanced island nation concluded that *Gond's Pride* had fallen into the wrong hands. The council fears that the ship's technology is simply too dangerous outside of Lantan, and they are determined to recapture it.

The Lantanna, however, are a peaceful people who resort to force only to defend themselves. Hence, it was decided that they would send an envoy to one of the coastal cities to find adventurers who would take the offensive and recover *Gond's Pride*.

For the DM

For many adventures, the PCs have been hounded by Platonus, their arch-rival and all-around nemesis. The evil mage has recently arrived in the same coastal city as the heroes (or perhaps the heroes tracked him here). Platonus is looking for a sure way to get rid of the annoying PCs.

Platonus received word that there was a strange fellow from the mysterious island of Lantan looking for adventurers to undertake a dangerous mission. He went to this man and, using an *alter self* spell, posed as a female wizard named Katrina, leader of a powerful group of mercenaries. "She" listened intently to the envoy, one Yogol Flamkal, and learned that the Lantanna wanted to hire them to recover a special ship that had been lost at sea and which apparently has fallen into the hands of the priesthood of Umberlee. While listening to his offer, Platonus concocted an insidious plan.

When Yogol was done, "Katrina" rejected the idea of "her group" going on the adventure. ("Oh, you want us to leave right away. Sorry, we just can't go so soon."). However, she recommended other adventurers in town who would

Platonus: AL CE; AC 2; MV 12; W14; hp 40; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type or spell; S 12; D 17; C 15; I 17; W 13; Ch 10; XP 11,000. *Wand of fire* (30 charges), *ring of protection +2, bracers of defense AC 4, dagger +3;* Scroll with *monster summoning II* and *fireball.*

Appearance: Platonus is 5'9" tall, weighs 160 lbs., and wears unassuming clothes. He is a schemer who was never liked by his peers in Waterdeep and was left nothing of his parents' inheritance. After years of bad luck and unsocial behavior, he found something he could do well: magic. With this knowledge, he has resolved to destroy society through the work of his friends (monsters, generally humanoid, that he *charms).* He is a worshipper of Talos and endorses that deity's theology of creating chaos and anarchy wherever possible.

Platonus is a nemesis of the player characters. For several months, every plot that he has tried has been foiled by the heroes, and he is anxious for revenge.

Spellbook:

1st level: *Affect normal fires, change self, comprehend languages, grease, hypnotism, magic missile, mount, protection from good, shocking grasp, spider climb.*

2d level: *Alter self, bind, ESP, flaming sphere, hypnotic pattern, knock, know alignment, levitate, magic mouth, rope trick.*

3d level: *Clairaudience, dispel magic, fireball, infravision, leomund's tiny hut, monster summoning I, protection from normal missiles, slow, vampiric touch, water breathing.*

4th level: *Charm monster, dig, fire shield, ice storm, improved invisibility, monster summoning II, polymorph self, stoneskin.*

5th level: *Chaos, cloudkill, domination, hold monster, monster summoning III, transmute rock to mud, transmute mud to rock, wall of stone.*

6th level: *Bigby's forceful hand, chain lightning, monster summoning IV, true seeing.*

7th level: *Monster summoning V, teleport without error.*

fit the bill perfectly and gave the names and location of the PCs along with details of some of their more renown exploits. She encouraged Yogol to look them up and promised, "You won't regret it!"

Yogol thanked Katrina and left to find the PCs. Platonus cast *improved invisibility* on himself and followed along.

As the PCs go through their interview with Yogol (see "For the Players"), Platonus listens to all the details. If the PCs make it difficult to be heard and take precautions (such as going to a private room and ensuring that no one follows them in), he uses *clairaudience* to listen in on the conversation. If the PCs are cautious and make this impractical, he waits until they emerge and casts *ESP* on a PC to learn the details of their plan.

Once he has listened in, Platonus *teleports* to Lathhtarl's Lantern. There he visits the clergy of Umberlee in the Grotto of the Queen. Posing as a low-level mage worshipper of Umberlee, he warns Umberlina, the chief priestess of the temple, that the PCs have been hired by the Lantanna and will arrive in a few days to steal the magical boat the priesthood has acquired. He gives her full descriptions of the PCs and includes what he knows of their spell-using abilities and magic items, and he warns her to be ready. He even casts several *magic mouth* spells on decorations within the temple sanctuary to distract the adventurers so that the priesthood of Umberlee is able to surprise them in a well-planned ambush.

Umberlina is grateful to this worshipper's warning and promises to pray for him on all his future sea journeys. She also excuses him from staying around, because it is obvious that he would be in peril from such dangerous adventurers. She then assembles the priesthood of the Temple and puts the final touches on her plan.

Once that is done, Umberlina sends word to a Tribute Gatherer, an undersea tanar'ri servant of Umberlee (see the sidebar on page 22) that in a few days she should have much treasure and magic from a new source (the PCs) and that the Gatherer should come collect it. In its deep undersea lair, the Tribute Gatherer receives the summons and proceeds lazily to the Grotto of the Queen.

Platonus leaves, satisfied to discover the outcome at a later date. The PCs have proven themselves formidable on more than one occasion, and they might actually survive the ambush. Even if they do not, the sinister priesthood of Umberlee has given him the creeps. Even under the worst circumstances (all the PCs surviving), they will be involved in Lathtarl's Lantern long enough to give him time for his next scheme. If they do not survive, then he will finally have rid himself of the pesky heroes. In any case it's a win-win situation for Platonus.

For the Players

It is assumed that the PCs are at some major seaport on the west coast of Faerûn , such as Waterdeep, Neverwinter, or Baldur's Gate when the adventure begins.

As the PCs are wandering through town, having lunch at an inn, or restocking their adventuring equipment, a very strange-looking fellow shows up looking for them by name. He identifies himself as Yogol Flamkal, an official envoy from the island nation of Lantan. Yogol has parchment white skin, copper colored hair, and green eyes. He wears robes of saffron marked with the symbol of Gond the Wonderbringer. After introductions, he states the following:

"Thank you for hearing me out. I come from Lantan on an errand for my nation. As you may know, we Lantanna are a peace-loving people. We fight only when we have no other recourse. We prefer to hire others when force of arms seems to be the only option. This is one of those times, and we are prepared to pay you very handsomely if you recover that which is ours.

"Several months ago a tremendous storm formed south of our island nation. Many of the islands in that region were devastated by a wave that seemed to come from nowhere, although several of our astronomers attribute the disaster to an object that fell from the sky. Fortunately the wave did not reach Lantan, but several of our trading vessels were lost at sea. One of these, a smaller vessel named *Gond's Pride,* was among them.

"This boat is a magical vessel that we use for quickly delivering messages to our envoys and consuls in other nations. It can travel rapidly under the waves with a pocket of air surrounding it for the crew. While doing this, an

Sword Coast Aquatic Random Encounters

Roll 1d10 three times per day. On a roll of a 1, roll 1d8 to determine what the PCs have encountered, or pick something interesting or challenging for the PCs. Each random encounter should occur no more than once.

1. Dolphins (10): INT very; AL LG; AC 5; MV 30; HD 2+2; hp 18, 16 (×3), 15, 13 (×3), 10, 8; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2–8; SA nil; SD save as F4; SZ M (5'6" long); ML 11; XP 120 each; *MM*/59.

This small school follows the PCs' vessel for one hour, frolicking about and jumping high out of the water. PCs can easily persuade them to jump up to snatch fish or play with some object like a ball or hat. Once PCs get within three miles of Umberlee's temple, the dolphins leave. The Lantanna call the dolphins the "friends of Gond."

2. Yellowbright (Young Topaz Dragon): INT exceptional; AL CN; AC 1; MV 9, fly 24 (C), swim 9; HD 7; hp 50; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 2–7, 2–7, 2–16 (each with +2 dmg); SA breath (2d6+2 dehydration damage + d6+6 loss of Strength (save for half damage and half loss); Psionics: telekinesis, control wind, biofeedback, soften (120 PSPs available); SD protection from good 3/day; XP 3,000; *MM*/74.

Yellowbright's head pops up out of the water next to the ship, and she complains loudly that the fishing is lousy in this area and asks for something to eat, preferably giant squid. The Lantanna are absolutely terrified and encourage the PCs not to attack. If fed at least one barrel of fish, Yellowbright departs back under the waves. If the PCs attack, Yellowbright uses her breath weapon and then jumps on board to eat the nearest crewmen (or PCs). The rigging is damaged, causing a full day's delay. When reduced to fewer than half her hp, Yellowbright jumps back in the water, submerges, and swims away.

3. Ixitxachitl (12): INT average; AL CE; AC 6; MV swim 12; HD 1+1; hp 9 (cleric), 8 (×5), 7 (×6); THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 3–12; SA spells (Cleric only: *protection from good, darkness, charm person/mammal* [cast]); SD nil; ML 13; XP 65 (cleric), 35 (all others); *MM*/209.

A high pitched whistling is heard coming from the ocean. One of the sailors suddenly stops what he is doing, climbs over the railing, and jumps into the water. Swimming toward him are several large manta rays. These are hungry ixitxachitl. Their cleric leader has cast *charm person* on the sailor, luring him into the water. If not rescued in three rounds, he is dragged to the bottom, leaving only blood behind.

4. Pirates: A longship is sighted and starts bearing toward the PCs' vessel. The Lantan sailors frantically try to start the wind-making machine, but the longship with its many oars closes rapidly, and arrows fly through the air. Two of the crewmen manning ropes to the exploding nets are hit and fall. Tuskor orders two PCs to man the ropes and pull on his command. Soon after that, he starts the smoke-making machine and a thick smoke screen, generated from the bird's beak, streams back toward the longship. Once the ship is obscured, Tuskor yells "Now, pull the ropes, me hearties!" and a thump and splash is heard. About 30 seconds later, there is a thunderous explosion of flame and the *Spirit of Sambar* continues to move away.

The PCs may try to convince the Lantanna to go back and take the pirates as prisoners, but only a very convincing argument and a successful Charisma check (–3 penalty) persuades them. If this happens, the Lantanna crew man the sides of the ship with arquebuses loaded and ready. The pirate ship is listing badly. The Lantan exploding net has blown a hole in its starboard side and bow, and surviving pirates (there are 22 of them) are trying to get into the three life boats on board. Facing a long row of pointed arquebuses and having just been blown out of the water, the pirates surrender quickly without a fight. They will be taken to the hold of the *Spirit of Sambar* and put in irons.

One of the longboats has a chest in it with the pirates' treasure. It contains 100 pp, 3000 gp, 15 gems (total value 8,000 gp), and five potions *(healing* (×2), *extra-healing, levitation, treasure finding).* The pirate captain, Jocko Mcfeeyre, speaks with a thick brogue and is none too friendly to his captors, but he knows overwhelming odds when he sees them and will try to escape later. He carries a *battle axe +2* and a *shield +1.* On his left pinky finger is a ring that confers 10% magic resistance. It can be worn by any character, but it has a 10% chance of ruining any spell cast by a spellcaster who wears it.

Jocko McFeeyre: AL NE; AC 0; MV 12; F8; hp 66; THAC0 13; #AT 2/1; Dmg 1–8+5; SA 17 S (+1 to hit, +1 dmg), 17 D (–3 AC), specialized 2/1 attacks per round, +1 to hit, +2 dmg); S 17; MR 10%; ML 15; XP 500.

The pirates (see statistics on page 15) have no information about *Gond's Pride* but they do know the location of the Grotto of the Queen (they have put into Lathtarl's Lantern on several occasions in the past few years). In exchange for freedom, one of the pirates, Jake Sneverex, acts as a guide for the PCs. He is a F3 with 22 hp.

5. Kapoacinths (12): INT low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9, swim 15; HD 4+4; hp 28 each; #AT 4; Dmg 1–3/1–3/1–6/1–4; SA nil; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; SZ M (6' tall); ML 11; XP 420 each; *MM*/131. These ruthless sea gargoyles swim underwater toward the ship, clamber up its sides, and attack.

6. Sea Hags (3): INT average; AL CE; AC 7; MV 12, swim 15; HD 3; hp 24 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 7–10 (Dagger and 18/00 Strength); SA *change self* at will; ghastly appearance causing all who view to save vs. spell or lose half Strength for 1d6 turns; deadly glance 3/day, victim saves vs. poison or dies from fright (25% chance) or is paralyzed for three days (75% chance); MR 50%; SZ M; ML 11; XP 1,400 each; *MM*/181.

What looks like part of a vessel's side is floating lazily in the ocean. Seen in the moonlight, waving and crying frantically for help, are three pretty but haggard women dressed in rags. When the PCs or sailors allow them on board, the women transform into their true forms; sea hags hungry for human flesh.

7. Selkie: INT average; AL N (good tendencies); AC 9 (human form), 5 (selkie form); MV 12, swim 36; HD 3+3; hp 22; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1–6 (as selkie) or by weapon; SD can change into human form for a few days at a time; SZ M; ML 12; XP 175; *MM*/311.

Suddenly a large aquamarine colored horse's head appears off the port side and neighs loudly. Instead of a mane, it has webbed fins on its head. Clinging desperately to the fins is a choking man who is wounded in several places. He cries out, "Help me. Please." The horse is a hippocampus that comes right next to the ship to allow the PCs to throw

his passenger a rope to get him aboard. Once up, the hippocampus disappears.

The man has several terrible wounds. He says his name is Rodney and that he was aboard a ship that was attacked by a large tentacled creature. He fell overboard and watched as the ship was crushed and his shipmates eaten. He swam away, but was attacked by several sharks. Just as the sharks were about to finish him, a group of large swimming, horselike creatures came by and drove the sharks off. One of the creatures swam underneath him and rose up so that Rodney could ride him. He has been riding the creature for a day. Rodney struggled to survive, having to hold his breath when the hippocampus swam underwater.

Rodney's story is only partially true. He is actually a young selkie out looking for adventure. He had taken on human form and was swimming toward the coast when he was attacked by sharks. Encumbered with human clothing and weapons, he was unable to escape, and the hippocampi came to his rescue. He has no problems breathing underwater, however. Rodney is brash, adventuresome, and gladly accompanies the PCs if given a chance. He swears service for a month to whichever PC pulls him aboard. He wears leather armor (badly in need of repair now) and carries a short sword and dagger.

8. Morkoth: INT exceptional; AL CE; AC 3; MV 3, swim 18; HD 7; hp 50; #AT 1; Dmg 1–10; SA hypnosis (save vs. spell or be charmed); SD reflects all spells back at caster; SZ M (6' long); ML 14; XP 1,400; *MM*/258.

Suddenly the salty smell of the sea becomes one of rotted, dead fish, and the PCs must save vs. poison or become incapacitated for 1–3 turns (save for only –1 on attacks and saves). Two rounds after this happens, a horrid, inky black man-sized creature with squid legs and insect-like arms crawls onto the ship, snapping a toothy mouth.

This is a morkoth that has left its tunnel, and the stench in the sea is the morkoth's scent left to attract a mate. It has been wandering for a week and has grown hungry. It attacks fearlessly and does not leave until it has lost 75% of its hit points or it has devoured a victim.

arch from the aft reaches just above the surface in the shape of a bird's head, and one member of the crew can observe what is outside and relay instructions to the pilot. It can also travel normally above the surface by using its four oars, each finely shaped like wings of a bird. Such a craft is one of a kind, and we fear it has fallen into the wrong hands.

"A month ago, reports reached us that vessels operating close to the village of Lathtarl's Lantern have been attacked by an unholy lighted being that swims underwater. The stories say that a huge skull skims the surface of the ocean as it quickly closes, and that after this creature rams its victim, it disgorges skeletons of men to slaughter the crew of the victim ship.

"We do not believe such a being exists. The description, except for the skull, sounds like the *Gond's Pride.* Indeed, our agents have learned that there is a temple devoted to Umberlee located at Lathtarl's Lantern. This village is also well known for harboring outlaws, fugitives, and pirates. We believe that our boat fell into their hands and has been altered somehow to serve the evil Temple.

"If it is the *Gond's Pride,* we must have it back. Being a nation of inventors, we share only technology that we feel will not cause further disruption in the world. *Gond's Pride* in the hands of Umberlee's clergy or pirates is too much of a threat to peace. Will you recover *Gond's Pride* for us?"

The Gondsmen of Lantan indeed pay well. Yogol is authorized to offer up to 5,000 gp to adventurers who complete the mission. If sorely pressed, he offers not only that sum but also an arquebus to each PC with a supply of powder and shot, which is turned over upon complete success of the mission. (If the DM does not want to introduce firearms into his campaign, he should ignore all further references to firearms and substitute finely made heavy crossbows). The envoy also offers to take the PCs to Lathtarl's Lantern via a Lantan ship, the *Spirit of Sambar,* which is currently off shore and out of sight.

If the PCs haggle too much, Yogol makes one final offer, sighs, and leaves to find other mercenaries.

Yogol (hm 0 level diplomat): AL LN; AC 8; MV 12; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SZ M (5'8"tall); ML steady (11); S 9, D 12, C 10, I 15, W 16, C 11; dagger, sea green garments with an embroidered golden symbol of Gond on his breast, leather armor.

The Trip to Lathtarl's Lantern

When night falls, Yogol takes the PCs to a longboat at the docks. Several Lantanna oarsmen armed with arquebuses and cutlasses crew this boat. They row Yogol and the PCs to a strange ship, anchored in a hidden cove.

In the rising moon, you see a red ship with yellow sails rigged with all kinds of strange ropes and contraptions. Behind the sails is the wooden figure of a large bird with outstretched wings. A few ballistae are visible at the bow of the vessel, but there seems to be an unusually shaped compartment on the aft that is also rigged with ropes as if to open it up and release something.

The *Spirit of Sambar* is a Lantanna warship used to escort vessels with precious cargo. During the voyage, the PCs should be allowed to explore the ship and look at the ingenious mechanical devices that the Lantanna have on board, although they will be sternly shown away if they try to touch or manipulate any of them. These wonders include the mechanical bird that beats its wings to provide wind to the sails, a generator that spews a smoke screen from the bird's beak, exploding nets that can be released from the back of the ship, and mechanical devices that raise and lower the sails and anchor quickly. If the DM wants to give the PCs the opportunity to experience the use of these devices, he should spring random encounter #4 on them during the voyage.

The master of the vessel is named Tuskor. He is a stout fellow who bears several scars from previous sea battles. He and his crew are friendly enough, but it is obvious that they are all like Yogol: about half have been in battles and never want to experience another one in their lives. They are grateful that the PCs have undertaken the mission. None can be persuaded to help the PCs beyond providing safe transport to Lathtarl's Lantern, unless ordered to do so by Yogol. He will issue no such orders except in an emergency.

Tuskor: AL LN; AC 6 (studded leather + Dexterity); F5; MV 12; hp 35; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (cutlass

+1); SZ M (5'10" tall); ML 14; S 14, D 15, C 11, I 14, W 13, C 12; *cutlass +1*, heavy crossbow, sea green garments with an embroidered silver symbol of Gond on his breast.

Crewmen (30): AL LN; AC 7; MV 12; F2; hp 12 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (cutlass) or 1d6 +1 (heavy crossbow) or 1d10 (arquebus); I 10; SZ M (5'8"); ML 12; cutlasses, heavy crossbows or arquebus, same type of robes as Tuskor, except that the symbol of Gond is embroidered in white thread.

The voyage should not take long, depending on the PCs' port of departure. A trip from Baldur's Gate takes a few days, while one from Neverwinter or the Moonshae Islands lasts a few weeks. Although the *Spirit of Sambar* is a sailing vessel, the mechanical bird that creates wind in times of calm is their means to ensure that it always travels at top speed.

The DM may wish to insert random encounters for the trip and may consult the sidebar for an appropriate activity to challenge the PCs. A DM who wishes to move the adventure quickly can just avoid random encounters, although it is recommended that the PCs have at least one encounter prior to reaching Lathtarl's Lantern.

Arrival

Late one afternoon, Tuskor finally heads to shore and guides the ship to a concealed deep water cove by a swampy area north of Lathtarl's Lantern.

> Yogol approaches your group and says, "This is as close as we dare get to Lathtarl's Lantern and its evil Temple. The crew is preparing a longboat for you. We will wait for three days. After that we will assume you were unsuccessful and have been killed. May the wonder of Gond go with you."

PCs have some options upon arrival. First, if they captured pirates along the way (See random encounter #4), Jake Sneverex is willing to guide them to the temple in exchange for a promise of a full pardon. Second, they can take the longboat south to the Winding Way and explore along the river line. They should have no problems in the daylight spotting the steps coming down the ridge to the Temple's entrance. The third option is to go into the village of Lathtarl's Lantern itself and get information. The text assumes that the PCs go into the village at night, but if they bypass it totally, it can be ignored.

If the DM wants the PCs to have an encounter along the way, the swampy area is replete with snakes, lizard men, and a few ghosts. The following are possible encounters to be used in the DM's discretion:

1. Snake, Poisonous (5): INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 15; HD 2+1; hp 12 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison (failure to save results in 3–12 hp damage in 1–6 rounds); SZ S; ML 8; XP 175 each; *MM*/430.

As the PCs row along the swamp edge, five aggressive black snakes slither through the water and crawl into the boat. Because it is dark and the cold-blooded snakes are difficult to spot (even with infravision), PCs are surprised on a roll of 1–5 on 1d10.

2. Lizardmen (8): INT low; AL N; AC 5; MV 6, swim 12; HD 2+1; hp 17, 16 X 3, 14 X 4; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1–2/1–2/1–6; SZ M (7' tall); ML elite (14); XP 65 each; *MM*/227.

A patrol of lizardmen spots the PCs and crashes through the bushes throwing spears, figuring the adventurers are easy meat. They then dive into the water and swim underwater to capsize the boat and kill its occupants using teeth and claws.

3. Ghost: INT high; AL LE; AC 0 or 8 (in ethereal plane); MV 9; HD 10, hp 50; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg age 10–40 years; SA magic jar attack; aging attack and fear; SD can only be attacked while in semi-material form; hit only by silver (full damage) or magic (half damage) weapons; SZ M; ML Special; XP 7,000; *MM*/130.

A mist-shrouded soldier is seen wandering through the swamp. If the PCs ignore him he passes by with no problem. If they shout out at him, however, he turns, revealing glowing orange eyes and he quickly floats over to the PCs with a horrible grimace on his face. What looks like a crude sword seems to be stuck in his body. This is the angered spirit of an adventurer who was killed (and eaten) by lizardmen after being abandoned by his comrades. The spirit wanders the swamp looking for his former companions and thinks that the PCs are them. It attacks until turned or destroyed.

Lathtarl's Lantern

If the PCs go into Lathtarl's Lantern (or scout it out), they find a collection of about 40 wretched homes and one tavern, the Inn of the Wailing Wave. Thirty of the homes are occupied by pirates, slavers, and their families. The other 10 are inhabited by fishermen. One fairly decent brick home used to belong to Lathtarl, founder of the community. Now it is owned by Jollus Screever, owner of the Wailing Wave.

On the edge of town is a fenced enclosure containing 15 huts. These are occupied by 25 captives who are destined to be sold as slaves. The enclosure is protected by five guards and two fierce war dogs.

PCs may wish to break into homes to get information or attempt to free the captives. At night there is only a 10% chance that anyone is in the home before 2:00 A.M. when the Wailing Wave closes, then everyone is at home. PCs breaking into the homes have a 10% chance of being spotted which causes the entire patronage of the Inn to come running to catch the intruders.

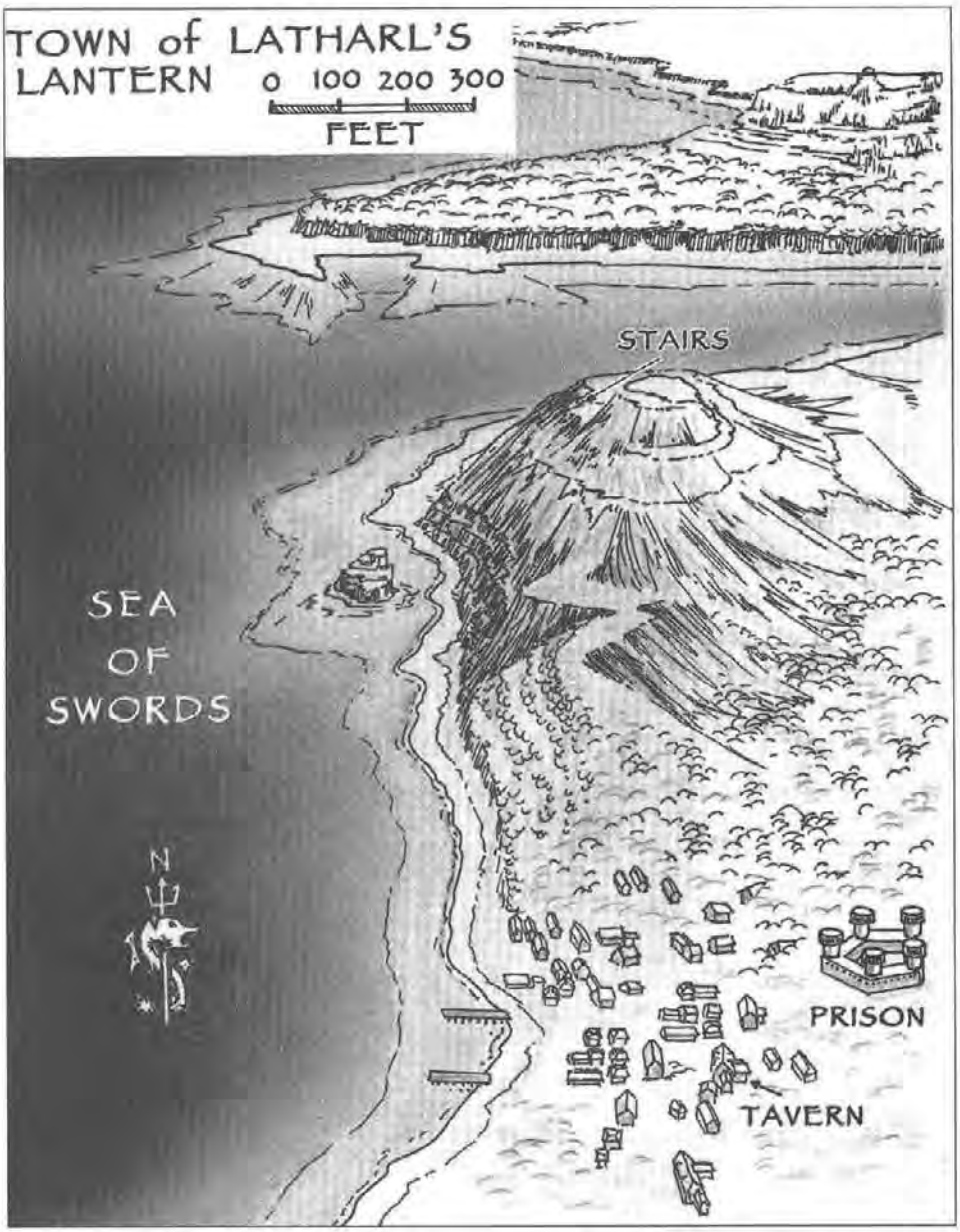
Freeing the slaves is trickier. Although the guards look listless and bored, the war dogs are alert and bark loudly if a PC comes near. Once the guards realize that there is trouble, one runs to the Wailing Wave to get help. Captured PCs are stripped of belongings and thrown into the enclosure with the other prisoners. If the adventure takes this turn, the DM might be kind and engineer a way for the PCs to escape. If any PCs escape and make their way back to the *Spirit of Sambar,* Yogol is displeased but grudgingly sends six crewmen with arquebuses and long swords to help the escaped adventurers free their captured comrades.

Guards (5): AC 5; MV 12; hp 25, 24 (×2), 21, 20; F3; THAC0 18 (17 long sword); #AT by weapon (3/2 long sword; 2/1 short bow); Dmg by weapon (1d8+2, long sword; 1d6/1d6 shortbow); SZ M (5'9"); ML elite (13); AL NE; XP 120 each.

Special Equipment: long swords, short bows, quivers with 12 flight arrows each; scale mail; medium shields, small helmets.

Dogs, War (2): INT semi; AL N; AC 6; MV 12; HD 2+2; hp 16, 14; #AT 1; Dmg 2–8; SZ M; ML 10; XP 65 each; *MM*/57.

Freed prisoners state that they are all crewmen from *The Happy Mermaid,* a caravel out of Waterdeep. Their vessel was taken five days ago, and they have been told by the guards that soon their



new owners, slavers from Calimshan, will arrive to pick them up. They are extremely grateful if rescued, but they are all weak from lack of food and can offer only limited help to the PCs. All of the prisoners are 0 level, AC 10, and have 1d6+1 hp each.

The Inn of the Wailing Wave

When PCs peek in or enter the tavern, read the following:

> The large noisy tavern is filled with many customers. A fiddler, zither player, and drummer crank out crazy tunes. Besides humans, you make out the tall forms of three ogres with large stone mugs of drink, a group of six humanoids with dog-like heads lapping up brew from large pans placed on their table, and three half-orcs engaged in a game that looks like "rock, paper, scissors" except that whoever loses gets a solid punch in the gut. Two other half-orcs, apparent losers of the game, lean against a wall holding their stomachs.
>
> Through the thick pipe smoke you can see that the bar is crowded with customers, human and otherwise, shouting orders for drinks. The bartenders are doing their best to please them.

If the PCs enter, the patrons ignore them as long as they do not display holy symbols of good deities or act self-righteous. Everyone is welcome at the Inn of the Wailing Wave, as long as no one tries to impose any rule of law.

There are numerous possibilities for roleplaying in this scene that go beyond the scope of the adventure text. PCs can get into bar fights easily if they're not careful (50% chance that someone does not like their looks, is bumped, etc., and a 75% chance that the offended half-orc, gnoll, etc. cannot be mollified with a drink). If a fight breaks out, other patrons rush over to disarm the opponents. Those in armor are forced to remove it. Then the patrons clear a large spot in the middle of the tavern and throw the opponents at each other to fight bare-handed. Loud wagering and cheering goes on during the entire progress of the fight, which ends only when someone is knocked out. The DM should review the rules on unarmed combat in Chapter 9 of the *PHB*, for this type of encounter.

If looking for information, the PCs can discover tidbits of information by buying drinks, being sociable, and having a good time. Things that they can discover include:

❖ The slavers from Calimshan will arrive the day after tomorrow to pick up the new slaves. They should bring in a fine haul.

❖ Two months ago, the clerics of Umberlee took out Mecembo's coaster. He was attempting to loot the Temple.

❖ "Old Barnaby, he sure bamboozled those foolish adventurers didn't he?" (If this is pursued, the speaker says, "Oh, you're new in town, ain'tcha? Well, Umberlina got warning that some adventurers were coming to take her Temple, and we were on the lookout for 'em. When they got here, we sent Gustag to warn them that they were here, and old Barnaby delayed them for an hour and then showed 'em the path. Boy, I'll bet Umberlina and her crew really smeared them!")

❖ "The Temple? Why sure, it's just north of town. You gotta wait until low tide to get in though unless you can breathe underwater. Look, just go due north for a quarter-mile until you get to a ridge. Look for a set of stairs going

down. Then when it's low tide, you'll see the entrance at the bottom and you can go right in. Umberlina ain't too keen on silver. Gold and gems is what will get you her blessing, that's for sure. I'd sure wait until tomorrow, though. I hear the clerics ambushed a bunch of adventurers this evening and they're probably resting."

❖ "See that guy over there? (Pointing to an ogre). He just told me that your mother was a scum-sucking bottom dweller, and that you were a spineless coward! I wouldn't take that from him! He's got a big mouth, but he's all talk! Go on, you can take him!"

❖ "Try red-dog rum. It's cheap and the best!" (Any PC who tries a shot of this vile drink must make a saving throw vs. poison or become violently sick to his stomach, which causes several of the patrons to heave him out the door.)

❖ "Yeah, old Lathtarl, he died some years ago. This place isn't what it used to be. Why I remember when Old Jason McCully roamed the high seas and came here often. Now there was a terror. Yep, he wasn't one to be intimidated. Why, he even spit in the eye of the executioner of Neverwinter just before he was hanged!"

❖ "Yeah, it sure surprised everyone when those adventurers came overland from Baldur's Gate to attack the Temple. Umberlina thought for sure they would arrive by sea. Well no matter, I'm sure they're dinner for her pets now once they're through questioning the survivors."

Some of these items of information should be shocking to the PCs. Adventurers from Baldur's Gate coming overland to attack the Temple? The clerics of Umberlee setting an ambush? If they put the clues together, what they should realize is that the clerics of Umberlee were warned about their arrival, and ambushed other adventurers. They should also figure out that it is only a matter of time before the clerics interrogate any prisoners, realize that there are more adventurers (the PCs) prowling around, and reset the ambush.

Thus the PCs have a choice to make: 1) abandon the mission and thereby avoid the ambush; or 2) immediately proceed to the Temple and hit it hard while the priests' security might be relaxed. The text assumes that the PCs proceed to the Temple. If they lean toward abandoning the mission, that is their right, but let Yogol, Tuskor, or another NPC point out that there may be good adventurers who were captured and need rescuing.

The heroes may decide to delay their assault on the temple. This is not a good choice, since the clerics of Umberlee figure out that two groups plan to pay them a visit, and they prepare for the PCs' arrival. See the sidebar "What if the PCs delay their assault?"

Pirates, slavers, and outlaws (60): AL NE; AC 6; MV 12; hp 40 (×3), 38 (×5), 37, 35 (×20), 34 (×22), 30 (×9); THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon 1d8 (long sword) or 1d6 (club); SZ M (5'9"); ML elite (13); XP 120 each.

Gnolls (6): INT average; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 2; hp 14 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (battle axe); SZ L (7'); ML Steady (11); XP 35 each; *MM*/158.

Half orc (5): INT average; AL LE; AC 4; MV 12; F5; hp 40, 36, 35 (×2), 31; THAC0 16 (15 short sword); #AT 1 (3/2 short sword); Dmg 1d6+2 short sword; 1d6 club; SZ M (6'); ML elite (14); XP 175 each; *MM*/282.

Ogres (3): INT low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 4 +1; hp 25 each; THAC0 17;

What if the PCs Delay Going Into the Grotto of the Queen?

Setting up a time-table can be complex. The simplest method to use when running this adventure is to keep track of time from the moment that one of the PCs learns that the other adventuring party was ambushed in the Grotto of the Queen. Generally they can learn this only from interacting with the unsavory patrons at the Inn of the Wailing Wave in Lathtarl's Lantern, or if they stumble upon Shirila Montoya within the Grotto itself (area **7**). From this information, they should figure out that it will not take long for Umberlee's clerics to discover that they ambushed someone else, not the PCs. Once the evil priests discover this, they will reset the ambush and take other precautions.

PCs delay for three hours: The clerics discover that it was not the PCs who wandered into their ambush. The Tribute Gatherer arrives and collects his treasure. Umberlina convinces him to stay for a while to collect more (from the PCs). The clerics give the prisoners to the Tribute Gatherer (who promptly devours them). All of the resting clerics are roused, and the ambush is reset so that it will occur just as Shirila described it (see her monologue). Redeye is sent outside as a sentry. When he spots the PCs coming, he goes back into the temple and gives the waiting clerics the warning that they are on their way in. Prior to the PCs' arrival, the clerics who were resting are in the secret corridors to the northeast and northwest of the sanctuary (area **9**).

PCs delay for 12 hours: Waveslam goes outside and relieves Redeye on watch. En route, he looks for the missing cleric and finds him in area **7,** dead. He also finds the unconscious Shirila Montoya and kills her. The clerics who were resting now arise and begin praying to regain spells. They recover spells at the rate of one spell level for every 10 minutes of meditation/prayer. The Tribute Gatherer gets tired of waiting for more treasure, tells Umberlina that he will get it another time, and leaves.

PCs delay for 16 or more hours: Umberlina and Marlex board *Gond's Pride* and take it out to the Winding Way River, then to the coast just off Lathtarl's Lantern, looking for the PCs' vessel. If they find it, they attack. All the other clerics emerge from the Grotto of the Queen and make their way by land to Lathtarl's Lantern. They arouse the populace to look for the PCs. If the PCs become embroiled in a battle, it will be one that the bards will sing about for years (if anyone lives to tell the tale). Note that if the PCs become involved in a land battle, *Gond's Pride* comes up to the shoreline and disgorges its undead crew to help the townspeople. In this type of scenario, the PCs should likely flee, and those who survive should feel very lucky indeed.

#AT 1; Dmg 1–6 (+6); SA +3 to hit due to strength; SD nil; SZ L (9'); ML 12; XP 270 each; *MM*/272.

The Grotto of the Queen

Just north of Lathtarl's Lantern is a large hill-like ridge that borders the mouth of the Winding Way. The ridge's blustery north face is a cliff that in most places is not climbable except by a PC with a mountaineering proficiency.

In the center of the ridge is a set of 300 steep, narrow stairs carved into the rock. They lead down to the rocky shore at the bottom. The 100th, 150th, and 225th stairs (counting from the top down) have all been loosened so that they give way whenever someone steps on one. In fact, the 100th stair is totally gone (the lead adventurer in the other party stepped on it and tumbled all the way down to his death; his body was swept away by the river's current). The 150th and 225th stairs are marked with a small but noticeable imprint of two waves in one corner to warn friends of Umberlee's Temple that these are loosened. A PC notices these with a successful Intelligence check (+2 bonus) or by carefully testing the stairs. PCs who fall must make a successful Dexterity check (–3 penalty) or fall and take 7d6 hp damage (150th stair) or 4d6 hp damage (225th stair).

Regular worshippers avoid the trapped steps by keeping a sharp lookout and counting the steps as they walk down.

Sea Level

1. Cave Entrance. At high tide (10 A.M. or P.M.) the entrance to Umberlee's temple is submerged and the stairs appear to lead right into the water. PCs might still enter if they have a way to *waterbreathe* or if they discover the tunnel and swim in underwater. They must hold their breath for three rounds to reach area **2,** where there is air.

At low tide (4 A.M. or P.M.), there is a fully exposed 6' diameter cave opening that goes straight into the ridge. It is totally dark inside and smells just like the strong, brackish water of the Winding Way. While at the entrance or anywhere within the complex, the PCs can hear a gong sound every hour on the hour. This is a magical effect that is caused by the water-clock in the sanctuary (area **9**).

2. Tunnel. After 30', the tunnel slopes upward for another 20' and ends at a T intersection. There is a small mark of Umberlee's symbol on the wall at this intersection with an arrow pointing to the left. This is to lure uninvited guests to the trap in area **3.**

3. Triggered Trap. The tunnel curves around to the left into a dead end. Lying there is a dead warrior clad in chain mail. The symbol of the Flaming Fist Company, a famous group of adventurers from Baldur's Gate, is on his shield. PCs who make a successful heraldry proficiency check recognize it. The prior adventuring party came this way, and this warrior took the full impact of the lightning *glyph of warding* placed in here as a trap. The dead adventurer has a backpack with ordinary items; the rest of his belongings were taken by his companions.

4. Detected/Sprung Trap. About 50' south of the intersection is a strange sight: eight harpoons sticking out of the walls ahead. Just beyond them is a limp trip wire just above another small symbol of Umberlee. After the loss of two party members, the leader of the Flaming Fists ordered their cleric to cast *find traps.* The spell detected the trip wire and the adventurers used a grapnel and rope to trigger the trap. The harpoons suddenly poked out of the walls, and the adventurers walked around them.

5. Staircase. The tunnel turns west and ends at a spiral staircase which leads up into darkness. These stairs are not trapped and lead to the Temple level.

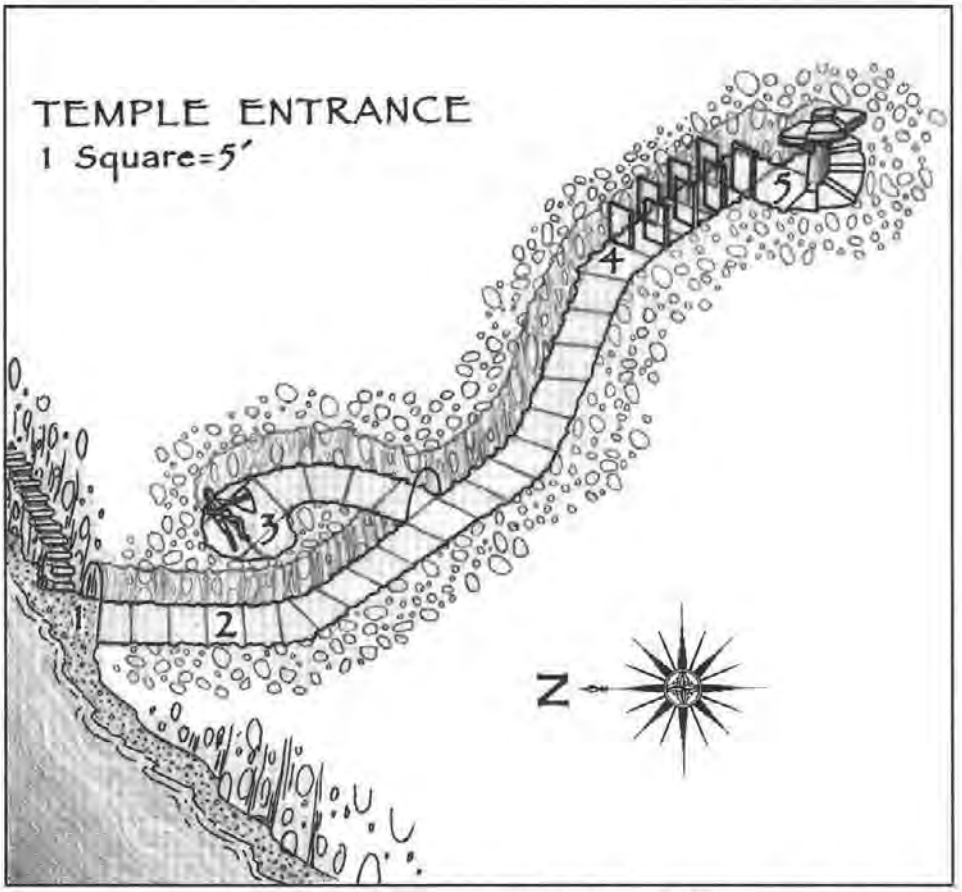
Temple Level

6. Hallway. A 10' corridor travels north for 40' and ends at a set of iron double doors embossed with the double wave symbol of Umberlee. On both sides of the corridor are closed single wooden doors. The door on the left is a privy and has a wooden disk hanging from a nail. One side of the disk is colored red, and the other side is blue. The disk has the blue side showing (indicating that the privy is unoccupied; the red side indicates that it is in use).

7. Cloak Room. This 15' × 15' room has many pegs and shelves around the walls where worshippers can hang coats, hats, or helmets. Lying on the floor are two bodies. One is a man wearing a tight-fitting blue cloth. Lying next to him is a bloodied mace and a shield. Around his neck is a silver holy symbol of Umberlee, and he wears coral bracelets on his wrists. A short sword is plunged into his heart. The other body is a leather-clad woman whose blonde hair is matted with blood. The Flaming Fist Company emblem is on her chest.

The woman is still alive. Once revived, she identifies herself as Shirila Montoya, a scout for the Flaming Fist Company. She and her companions came here to wipe out the Grotto of the Queen but they suffered two casualties; a ranger named Felton, who fell off a trapped step coming to the Grotto, and a warrior named Raskor who was killed by a magical symbol that shot lightning into him (see area **3**). The worst part came, however, when the six remaining adventurers went into the main sanctuary:

> "We entered a room that seemed to be a large worship area and noticed that to our left was an open doorway with a glow in the corridor beyond. On the walls around us hung large carved figures like those found on the bows of ships. As we walked over to the open portal, the doors through which we had entered slammed shut and all the figurines started laughing. They said, 'Well, well, if it isn't (names of PCs) coming for their deaths.' Then two priests leaped out of the glowing doorway. Then more priests seemed to boil out of nowhere on the other side of the room. Balorus, our mage, started to point his staff at them, but then he froze, absolutely still. Lekelatar cut one of the priests down with a spell, and Magnor immediately silenced them. Belzara and Sir Roderick charged the priests on the right and Magnor and I had to deal with the ones on the left.
>
> It was a terrible fight, and no doubt a trap for whoever (PCs' names) are. We did the best we could, but when Magnor burst into flames and Sir Roderick was cut down, it was more than I could handle. I fled and tried hiding in this room, but one of the priests followed me. I remember dealing him a mortal blow, but then all I saw were stars and blackness. Please, you must help me redeem myself and rescue whichever of my companions still live."



Shirila Montoya: AL N; AC 5; MV 12; T6; hp 30 (0 until cured); THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SA thief abilities, backstab ×3; SD none; MR 30% resistant to *sleep* and *charm* spells; S 12, D 16, C 15, I 11, W 10, Ch 14; SZ M; ML 13. Thief Abilities: PP 40%, OL 55%, F/RT 65%, MS 70%, HS 75%, RL 15%. Shirila has a *short sword +1*, +2 vs. aquatic creatures, *leather armor +1*, a set of thief tools, and a sling with 20 steel bullets. At this point she does not care about the reward offered for wiping out the Grotto of the Queen: all she wants to do is make up for deserting her companions.

If they have not figured it out by now, the PCs should finally realize that a trap was laid for them. The choice is not a good one: either to leave and abandon the brave adventurers who are now in the clutches of Umberlee's followers, or to proceed forward. Shirila encourages the latter course, and curses the PCs for being cowards if they decide to leave.

8. Latrine. This stinking privy is for the use of worshippers. A dark 2' diameter hole goes far down into a dimly lit area of some sort. The walls are too slick and filthy to get a good grip, but a PC who is not too large could get down by using *levitate, feather fall, rope,* or any other clever means. Waste falls into area **18.**

9. Sanctuary. The double doors open into a worship area that has been the scene of a pitched battle. Dim *con-*

tinual lights illuminate the area. Benches are kicked over, and there are blood stains everywhere. Around the southern walls are figurines that were once on the bows of ships. They include a unicorn, an elderly sailor, a stern faced matron with a mug of ale in her fist, a dragon head appearing to breath fire, a mermaid, an umberhulk, a winged skull, and a phoenix. When the Flaming Fist adventurers entered, they touched off *magic mouth* spells that caused the figures on the wall to laugh and talk as Shirila described.

The *magic mouth* spell is still in effect. PCs who enter trigger the spell again, alerting the clerics on this level. The clerics arrive in five rounds. The clerics' statistics are in the text describing the remainder of the rooms on this level. They do not send word downstairs to Umberlina, figuring they can handle matters themselves. One of the priests remains in the corridor to cast spells through the peephole behind the altar.

A PC can avoid the trap entirely if he removes the holy symbol from the body of the cleric and wears it into the room. That only works for him, however, but once inside he can remove the symbol and toss it back for others to enter. Award a PC who thinks of this an extra 500 XP. Casting *dispel magic* (against 14th level) disarms the *magic mouth*, as does a *silence 15' radius* spell.

To the left of the double doors is a blackened sooty area, the result of a *flame strike* cast by Umberlina on the Flaming Fist cleric.

At the north end of the Temple, the walls are textured to look like double waves, and there is a raised dais with a simple stone table and two collection plates. The two waves join behind the altar and there is a small peephole there that can be found by PCs looking for secret doors.

On the northwest wall, a door stands open. This is a secret door and the one that Shirila saw open (see area **7**). When the Flaming Fist adventurers entered, Findora (area **13b**) cast *faerie fire* inside the concealed corridor, giving it a mysterious glow that distracted the Flaming Fist adventurers to that side while the other priests of Umberlee came out of the secret door on the northeast side. The *faerie fire* has long expired by the time the PCs arrive.

Another secret door is on the northeast wall. It can be found normally and opened without much effort.

On the far eastern wall is an interesting clock encased in a 4' tall glassteel tube. Water squirts from a metal pipe in the wall, into the tube where it drains into a small cup. When the cup is full (after a minute), it dumps the contents into the bottom of the glassteel compartment, and the minute hand clicks on the clock. When the hour marker is reached, all the water that has accumulated in the bottom suddenly drains, and a gong sounds throughout the temple. This is a special clock that was made in Neverwinter, and while it can be removed, any disturbance ruins it (although a Neverwinter clockmaker could make it run again, assuming that a constant source of just the right amount of water can be engineered).

10. Glyphs. Worshippers are not allowed into the inner recesses of the temple, and *glyphs of warding* have been placed to protect against intruders. At each of the locations marked on the map, the *glyph of warding* blinds anyone without a holy symbol of Umberlee who gets within 5'.

11. Tilt-trap. At the end of this corridor is what appears to be a single door. A dwarf or a PC with the engineering NWP proficiency can tell that there is something unusual about the floor. The last 50' appears to be slick. Close examination reveals that the smooth sides of the walls do not connect with the floor; there is a small crack between them.

This is a trap. Whenever there is 50 lbs. of weight or more on the southern half of the corridor than there is on the northern half, the entire 50' tilts down and victims slide into a pool. The floor immediately snaps back up into place. The same thing happens if someone reaches the doorway and opens the false door (revealing a blank wall and a sign that says, "Farewell intruder").

Sliding victims plunge into a 20' deep underground lake containing a giant gar that the priests of Umberlee have been tending since it was born. (They removed it from the Winding Way river when it was very small.) Sacrifices provide the gar's food. Because the gar has nowhere to retreat, it fights until destroyed or until it has eaten all the victims.

Giant Gar: INT animal; AL N; AC 3; MV swim 30; HD 8; hp 48; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg 8–32; SA swallows up to 5' long object on an attack roll of 20; SD nil; MR nil; XP 2,000; *MM*/117–118.

PCs who slide into the lake can tilt the floor down but it takes creativity. A *telekinesis* spell or psionic discipline would work well. Raising someone up (the floor is 25' above the water), having that person put a spike in the floor, then tying a rope to the spike, and finally having everyone tug on the rope brings the floor down once 60 points of Strength are applied. Climbing up the slick floor requires creativity or magic (*fly, levitate*, using spikes as climbing pitons, etc.).

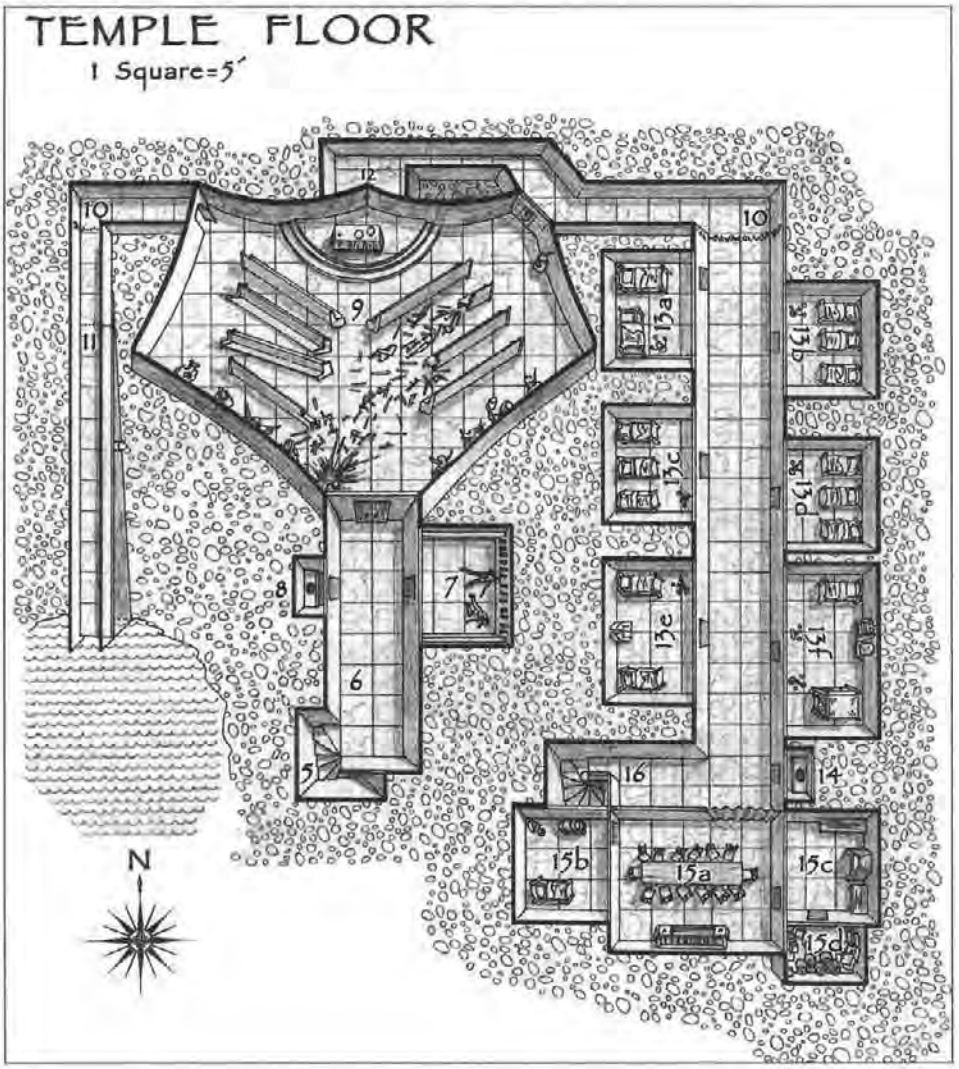
12. Peephole. Using the peephole in the secret corridor behind the main sanctuary, Umberlina cast her spells at the Flaming Fist Company.

13: Quarters of the Grotto Priests. There were 12 priests of Umberlee who served the Grotto, but only nine survived the battle with the Flaming Fists. Six are in their quarters resting, healing, and regaining spells. The other three are in the dungeon level interrogating the prisoners. If the PCs don't trigger the *magic mouth* (area **9**), the *glyphs* (area **10**), or make any other noise, they should be able to defeat the priests on this level, one room at a time. Rooms **13a–d** are furnished sparingly with plain beds, night stands, candles, and hooks for clothing.

It is possible that the PCs may capture one or more of these priests. They do not reveal any information willingly, even if *charmed*. *ESP*, however, could reveal the entire story, to include the imminent arrival of the Tribute Gatherer.

13a. Two of the priests died in the fight in the main sanctuary. They lie here in beds. One does not appear to bear any marks at all (he died from a *magic missile* spell), while the other bears numerous wounds (he died from fighters' swords). High Priestess Umberlina plans to raise them from the dead after she deals with the prisoners, rests, and regains her spells. Failing that, she casts *animate dead* on them and has them join the skeletal crew of the ship on the lower level of the Temple.

13b. Findora, a 6th-level priestess of Umberlee, rests here, trying to regain her spells. She was badly wounded, which is why she has not yet looked for her missing roommate (the dead cleric in room **7**). Like most of the priests of the Grotto, she expended most of her spells battling the Flaming Fist adventurers. She is in a green body suit



which is cut and slashed in numerous places. She wears a pair of small black pearl earrings (value 200 gp).

Findora, Priestess of Umberlee: AL CE; AC 9; MV 12; P6; hp 12 (42); THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (footman's mace); SA spells (remaining: *light, charm person/mammal, hold person, silence 15' radius, cause blindness);* breathes water automatically; SD has *protection from fire* already cast on herself; S 17, D 15, C 10, I 11, W 17, Ch 16; MR nil; ML 15; XP 650.

13c. Magat and Johnis rest in here. Although cured of their wounds, both are lying down and can be surprised easily. They do not surrender but yell for help as they grab their weapons and fight the intruding PCs.

Magat, Priest of Umberlee: AL CE; AC 7; MV 12; P5; hp 30; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (footman's flail); SA spells (remaining: *charm person/mammal, hold person*); SD None; S 12, D 14, C 11, I 12, W 15, Ch 17; MR nil; ML 15; XP 270. Magat is clad in leather armor and his shield lies nearby. He wears a helm that is made from a large conch shell. It could fetch 15 gp if it is not shattered.

Johnis, Priest of Umberlee: AL CE; AC 7; MV 12; P2; hp 12; THAC0 20, #AT 1; Dmg 2–7 (+1 ST) from mace; SA spells (none remaining); S 16, D 11, C 15, I 13, W 14, Ch 13; ML 15; XP 35. Johnis is likewise clad in leather armor. He wears a plain gold necklace (value 75 gp).

13d. Both priests in this room were not wounded and are discussing how they could have handled the battle better. Starmasta usually lives in room **13a,** but he is temporarily staying here while his room is being used as a morgue. PCs have an enhanced chance of surprising them (1–4 on 1d10). They both fight the PCs with their weapons, but Starmasta must make a morale check each round. Once he fails it, he surrenders. Both wear studded leather armor that bear inscribed figures of crocodiles, sharks, barracuda, and other fearsome water denizens.

Ingus, Priest of Umberlee: AL CE; AC 5; MV 12; P5; hp 32; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (Mace); SA spells (remaining: *curse, charm person/mammal; hold person; silence 15' radius);* breathes water automatically; S 15, D 16, C 15, I 16, W 16, Ch 10; ML 15; XP 270.

Starmasta, Priest of Umberlee: AL CE; AC 7; MV 12; P3; hp 15; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 2–7 (trident); SA spells (none remaining); S 11, D 13, C 13, I 12, W 14, Ch 15; ML 15; XP 65.

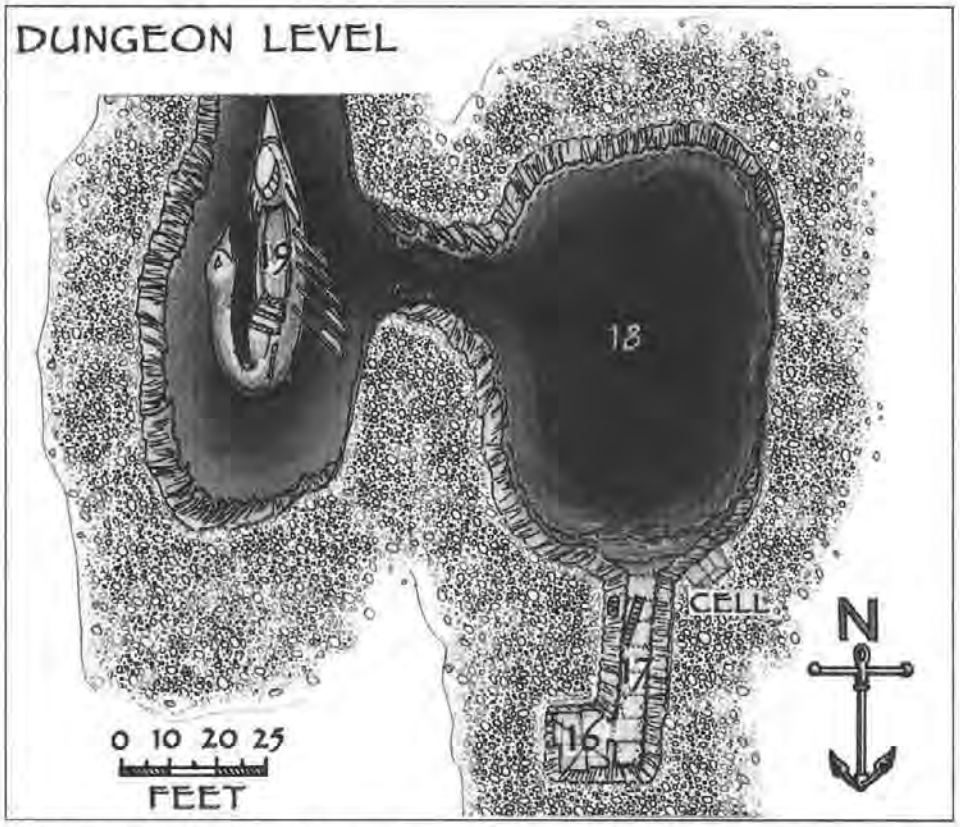
13e. Marlex and Shalandra stay here. This room is slightly larger and a little better furnished than most others. Marlex is the second ranking priestess of the Grotto and is downstairs with Umberlina helping to interrogate the prisoners. Shalandra is resting, trying to regain spells, having used all of them during battle and afterwards, curing her comrades.

Shalandra, Priestess of Umberlee: AL CE; AC 2; MV 12; P3; hp 18; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 2–7 (+1 Strength) from trident; SA spells (none remaining); SD nil; S 16, D 17, C 14, I 9, W 13, Ch 16; MR nil; ML 15; XP 65. Shalandra wears chain mail armor that has a greenish tint to protects it from rust.

In a dresser are eight finely crafted pieces of coral jewelry (total value 300 gp) often worn by Marlex on ceremonial occasions.

13f. This is the room of the head priestess, Umberlina, and her servant Waveslam. Both are downstairs interrogating the prisoners. In one corner is a dresser with a mirror decorated at the top with a frosted symbol of Umberlee. Next to the mirror is a jewelry case filled with jeweled bracelets, earrings, broaches, and necklaces fashioned from sea shells, coral, lava rock, and other undersea material. They have a total value of 2,500 gp.

Umberlina keeps a diary in which is found an entry detailing a recent visit by a worshipper (fitting the description of the PCs' nemesis) who warned the temple of the upcoming raid.



14. Latrine. Similar to the one in area **8**.

15. Kitchen Complex. The priesthood of Umberlee keeps one lay servant, a cook, to prepare their meals. He is Redeye, a retired pirate in his late 50's who acts like a doting grandfather but who really would sell his own mother for a few coppers. His sinister disposition and fine culinary arts made him a perfect choice for the temple's cook.

Redeye: AL CE; AC 9; MV 12; F5; hp 35; THAC0 16; #AT 2; Dmg by weapon; S 12, D 15, C 15, I 9, W 9, Ch 11; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; XP 270.

Redeye wears gold earrings fashioned like skulls and a ring with the same design (value 200 gp for the set). He also wears a holy symbol of Umberlee (not because he is religious, but because it gets him safely past the *glyphs* at area **9**). When confronted, he wields a rolling pin in one hand (Dmg 1–6) and a meat cleaver (Dmg 1–6) in the other. He is ambidextrous and suffers no penalty for attacking with two weapons.

15a. Dining Area. The room contains a sturdy wooden table and chairs large enough to accommodate all of the priesthood with up to two guests. A large china cabinet contains expensive gold rimmed china, fine crystal, and silver flatware. There is enough for 16 place settings. Total value is 300 gp.

15b. Redeye's Quarters. Redeye has spartan quarters, similar to those of the lower ranking clerics, save for his sea chest and a covered bird cage. The chest has Redeye's savings: 30 gp, 200 sp, 5 ep, and 167 cp. Also in here is a telescope (5 power), an old map of the Sword Coast, and a *dagger +2*. The bird cage contains Samantha, his parrot, a bird with a disposition nastier than its owner. When the cover is lifted by someone other than Redeye, Samantha loudly squawks, "Hey, who are you? Hey, who are you? Hey, who are you?" automatically alerting Redeye that someone is in his room. There is a 20% chance the parrot is also heard by the clerics on this level. If offered food, Samantha cocks her head, nods, and excitedly shrieks, " Samantha wantsa finger! Samantha wantsa finger!"

PCs may try to make friends with the parrot, and it goes along with the PC until it is outside and then it flies away. Anyone foolish enough to take the bird down to the dungeon level of the temple is in for trouble because the bird likes the high priestess (who does feed it fingers from time to time). Once Samantha spots Umberlina, it loudly yells out, "Samantha wantsa finger! Samantha wantsa finger!"

Samantha (parrot): INT low, AL N (evil tendencies); AC 7; MV 1, fly 24 (C); HD 1; hp 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1–3; SA on natural 20, Samantha snips off a finger with her strong beak; ML 12; XP 65; *MM*/27 (Bird, modified).

15c. Kitchen. What appears to be a fireplace for cooking usually has a bubbling stew of various fish, crustaceans, and vegetables. PCs may notice that there is no chimney for the smoke or any wood for a fire. Redeye mixes the ingredients and one of the priests helps out with a *heat metal* spell or two. The furnishings and equipment in here are ordinary.

15d. Storeroom. Redeye goes to town occasionally and buys condiments such as sugar, flour, salt, garlic, spices, and fresh vegetables which he stores in this cool room.

16. Stairway. A circular set of stairs carved into descends 110'. Halfway down is *glyph of warding*, which can be avoided if one of the PCs is wearing a holy symbol of Umberlee. This *glyph* causes 11d4 hp electrical damage (save for half damage).

Dungeon Level

17. Corridor.

> A dim light shows that the tall, dank, salt-smelling corridor opens into a large area ahead. Lying on the floor along the west side of the corridor is a ladder. Voices can be barely heard from the open area at the end of the corridor.

The ceiling of the corridor is 15' high. On the west wall is a secret door 10' up, which is easily reached with the ladder. This is where the priesthood of Umberlee stores its treasure for the Tribute Gatherer. The secret door is guarded with a *glyph of warding* (11d4 hp fire damage; save for half).

Inside the small compartment is a chest with 5 pp, 400 gp, 223 sp, and 57 cp. (Of this, 350 gp belong to the other adventurers, and the rest are recent

offerings from local fishermen and pirates.) There is also the equipment of the Flaming Fist Adventurers, including a *long sword +2* (from the dead fighter in area **3**), a *staff of fire* (same as *wand of fire* but it can also expel two *delayed blast fireballs* per day at no cost; it has 44 charges remaining), *bracers of defense* AC 4, two spell books, a *mace +1*, three *potions of healing*, one vial of poison antidote (ingested poisons only), a *ring of protection +1*, a *potion of water breathing*, a *battle axe +2*, and *chain mail +2*.

18. The Greeting Chamber.

The corridor opens into a large water covered area with a tall ceiling. A *continual light* illuminates the area. East of the corridor is a cage door set in the stone walls. The small cage contains two forlorn prisoners who are hunched over and standing in foot-high water. In front of them, also standing in water, are three of the priesthood of Umberlee, two females and one male. One of the females is wearing grayish leathery looking armor and carries a shield and trident. Another is dressed in a blue body stocking trimmed with white seal fur around the collar. She carries a harpoon. The male is dressed in a green body stocking decorated with black prints of fish life and seaweed; he also carries a harpoon.

Umberlina, the high priestess of the Grotto of the Queen, Marlex, her second in command, and Waveslam, Umberlina's bodyguard, are currently interrogating the survivors of the Flaming Fist adventurers. The two prisoners are Balorus the Mage and Lekelatar, an elven Fighter/Wizard. Sir Roderick, a paladin, is in the back of the cramped cell, still unconscious from his wounds.

When the PCs arrive, Umberlina has about lost her patience with the prisoners. Both she and Marlex have tried to *charm* them unsuccessfully. Umberlina gestures out to the open area and threatens to feed the prisoners to "my friends, who have just finished feasting on the remains of two of your pitiful band." She says, "The Gatherer will soon come, and it is not as patient as I am. We summoned our most unholy messenger for your treasure, but perhaps he would like your heads as well. If you do not answer my questions, he will make death seem like a blessing."

That does not seem to work either and she shrieks, "Fine! Taste this then!" She casts a *heat metal* spell on her trident and pokes at the helpless captives who cannot avoid being burned by the searing weapon.

If the PCs attack the trio and Umberlina and Marlex haven't been warned by Samantha, the priestesses need to roll for surprise. Because they are so focused on the prisoners, they each have a –1 penalty to their roll. After any surprise round, the following description is generally what the priests do in the battle. If the PCs are winning too easily, the DM may wish to have the Tribute Gatherer show up in the middle of the fray to give them a challenge (see below).

❖ **Round 1:** Waveslam heaves his harpoon at the closest PC. Marlex casts *hold person* at any PC who looks like a priest. Umberlina casts *slay living* at any PC who looks like a mage. The prisoners are surprised.

❖ **Round 2:** Waveslam pulls out his flail and interposes himself between attacking PCs and Umberlina. Marlex casts *faerie fire* on the PCs. Umberlina dives underwater using her water-breathing and free action abilities. She calls to the lacedons and undead sharks that live in the far side of the grotto. The prisoners shout at the PCs, "Beware the undead in the water!" If Waveslam or Marlex are close to the cell, the prisoners try to grab them so they cannot maneuver (no Dexterity bonus to AC or missiles) or cast spells. The prisoners can only grab one opponent and receive a +2 bonus on their THAC0 roll since they are attacking from behind.

❖ **Round 3:** Waveslam continues to battle until he falls. Marlex dives into the water using her ability to *water-breathe*. She swims underwater until she is 50' away. Umberlina, while underwater, casts *raise water* causing the water to reach high tide level in 1 turn. Eight lacedons emerge from the water. The prisoners continue to shout warnings to the PCs.

❖ **Round 4:** Marlex surfaces and casts *heat metal* on a PC wearing metal armor. The lacedons close and attack the PCs. Umberlina stays underwater unless the PCs somehow force her to the surface.

❖ **Round 5:** Marlex casts a *darkness* spell on a PC. The lacedons continue to attack until destroyed or turned.

❖ **Round 6:** Out of ranged offensive spells, Marlex emerges from the water and throws her harpoon at a PC.

❖ **Round 7–12:** Marlex fights with the PCs trying to cast *blindness* on a PC. After this she fights with her mace until dead or captured.

❖ **Round 13:** The water level rises 2', just enough for the undead sharks of Umberlina to attack the PCs anywhere except in the corridor. Umberlina casts *chant*. The prisoners begin to scream for help as the water rises. Rogue PCs trying to open the lock on the cage suffer a –25% penalty to their open locks attempt as the lock is underwater.

❖ **Round 14:** The water level rises another 2' and now the undead sharks can attack the PCs anywhere on this level, including the corridor. Umberlina finishes casting her *chant* spell. The prisoners are underwater, and the unconscious Sir Roderick drowns unless saved.

ϖ **Round 15+:** The undead sharks continue to attack until destroyed or turned. If not freed from the cage by this round, the other prisoners drown. Umberlina continues to chant as long as she has minions fighting. Once they are destroyed, she casts *animal summoning I* and attracts four enormous sharks (not undead) to deal with PCs who are still on this level. They arrive 1 turn after casting.

Umberlina, High Priestess of the Grotto of the Queen: AL CE; AC 2; MV 12, swim 18; P11; hp 67; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SA spells (remaining: *detect good* (×2), *faerie fire, light, curse* (×2), *chant, spiritual hammer, silence 15' radius, cause blindness, meld into stone, dispel magic, raise water, animal summoning I, slay living);* breathes water automatically and moves in water as if wearing *ring of free action;* SD *protection from lightning* and *fire* (cast prior to battle with Flaming Fist adventurers and not yet used up); S 12, D 15, C 15, I 16, W 18, Ch 13; MR nil; ML 18; XP 5,000. Umberlina is garbed in leathery *sharkskin armor +2* and carries a *shield +2*. She has a *trident +3* that can release (once a day) a stream of black ink underwater in a 50' diameter sphere to cover her escape.

Marlex, Priestess of Umberlee: AL CE; AC 6; MV 12, swim 12; P8, hp 50 (48); THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SA spells (remaining: *faerie fire, dark, remove fear, hold person, heat metal, blindness, control temperature 10' radius);* S 11, D 16, C 13, I 14, W 17,

Tribute Gatherer

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	The Abyss (Umberlee's Lair); Ocean (Prime Material Plane)
FREQUENCY:	Very Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Exceptional (15–16)
TREASURE:	F
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic Evil
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	0
MOVEMENT:	9, swim 36
HD:	10
THAC0:	11
NO. OF ATTACKS:	4+Special
DAMAGE/ATTACK	1–6 (+6) ×4
SPECIAL ATTACKS	Ink spray Bite Telekinesis
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	+2 or better weapon to hit;
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	20%
SIZE:	L (10' tall)
MORALE:	Fanatic (17–18)
XP VALUE:	8,000

Tribute gatherers resemble large gray octopi at first glance. They have two 6' long arms ending in hands with sharp claws as well as two 12' tentacles, much like those of an octopus. Its bulbous body has large flaps on the underside that extend outward and are used for propulsion (like a manta ray). They are also strong enough for the monster to prop itself up on dry land. In the middle of its underside is a secret pouch where the tribute gatherer stores treasure that it collects from the various temples of Umberlee and distributes it to those involved in plots meeting her favor.

Combat: In combat, the tribute gatherer uses its two taloned hands to attack for 1d8 hp damage. If both hands hit, the target is pulled into the tribute gatherer's gaping maw, where it suffers 5d6 hp damage. Each tentacle inflicts 1d12 hp damage and a roll of 17 or better means that the victim is wrapped up and suffers 1d12 hp squeezing damage each round thereafter (Bend Bars roll to escape).

In addition to its multiple melee attacks, the tribute gatherer can use its telekinesis ability, which throws an object (or person) of 500 lbs or less 30' away. This ability can be used every other round.

If in danger, this monster can spew out a black, caustic ink that causes 2d12 hp acid damage (save vs. breath weapon for half damage) which covers an area up to 100' square. It can do this once every three rounds. Tribute gatherers have a 20% resistance to magic and can only be hit by +2 or better weapons.

Ecology: These horrid creatures dwell primarily in the Abyss on Umberlee's layer. A select few are sent by Umberlee to Toril where they prowl the oceans and travel to her temples. There they collect treasure that is used to start new shrines and temples to Umberlee. They are known to be carnivorous, and there is no ocean creature that will even approach a tribute gatherer, save for a fish that has been summoned by a priest of Umberlee to deliver a message to the gatherer. The priest opens the mouth of the fish, speaks the message, and the fish swims to the closest tribute gatherer. When it arrives, the fish opens its mouth, and the tribute gatherer receives the message (typically a summons to collect treasure or for help). After the message is complete, the monster eats the messenger.

Ch 15; MR nil; ML 17; XP 1,400. Marlex wears no armor, relying on her high Dexterity and a *ring of protection +2* that she wears on her left small toe. The *ring* cannot be seen as it is covered by her bodysuit. She is armed with a *harpoon +1* and a mace. At her side is a flask with a liquid concoction that tastes like pureed caviar. Any spellcaster drinking as much as a sip forgets any remaining spells in his memory.

Waveslam, Priest of Umberlee: AL CE; AC 8; MV 12; P4; hp 32; THAC0 18; #AT 1, Dmg by weapon (+1 to hit, +2 damage from Strength); SA spells (none remaining); SD nil; S 18, D 16, C 15, I 15, W 14, Ch 12; MR nil; ML 16; XP 420. Waveslam is a muscular priest well suited to being the High Priestess' bodyguard and attendant. He has no treasure, and is armed with a harpoon and a flail.

Lacedons (8): INT low; AC 6; MV swim 9; HD 2; hp 13 each; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1–3/1–3/1–6; SA paralyzation; SD immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells; MR nil; SZ M; ML 12; XP 175 each; *MM*/131.

Undead Sharks (4): INT low; AL NE; AC 6; MV swim 24; HD 6; hp 36 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4; SA each hit drains 1 point of Strength permanently; ML n/a; XP 420 each; New Monster. Undead sharks do not bleed from their wounds. They are turned as wraiths.

Sharks (4): INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV swim 24; HD 4; hp 26 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg d4+1; ML n/a (due to summoning); XP 120 each; *MM*/117.

Prisoners who are freed are overjoyed at their rescue. They relate that two of their party, the priest Magnor and the fighter Belzara, were killed in the ambush on the temple level, and their bodies were thrown to the lacedons and undead sharks. They have no idea where their equipment or the Priesthood's treasure is. Although both are spellcasters, they were forced to drink a vile brew which made them forget all their spells.

Balorus (human mage): AL NG; AC 9; MV 12; W7; hp 3 (24); THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SA spells (none memorized); SD nil; MR nil; S 9, D 15, C 15, I 18, W 13, Ch 13; ML 15. Balorus is proficient with a staff and dagger.

Lekelatar (elf fighter/mage): AL CG; AC 6; MV 12; F5/W4; hp 5 (23); THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SA spells (none memorized); SD 90% resistant to *sleep* and *charm* spells; MR nil; S 15, D 18, C 16, I 16, W 10, Ch 14; ML 15. Lekelatar is proficient with a longbow, a short sword, dagger, blowgun, and mace.

Sir Roderick (human paladin): AL LG; AC 8; MV 12; Pal5; hp 0 (46); THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SA lay on hands 1/day for 10 hp, cures disease 1/week; SD protection from evil, +2 on saving throws; MR nil; S 16, D 16, C 14, I 13, W 15, Ch 17; ML 19. Sir Roderick is proficient with battle axe, long sword, horseman's mace, dagger, lance (heavy), and spear.

19. The Priesthood's Ship: A connecting tunnel leads to another large chamber lit by a *continual light* spell. Lying at anchor is a 50' long mastless ship. It appears to be a sailing vessel fitted with a battering ram. Lying motionless on the deck are 20 skeletons which are out of sight from the water level. Ten zombies are below deck.

The water in this chamber is 30' deep, making swimming or flying to the

ship the only likely options. Once something or someone not wearing a holy symbol of Umberlee reaches the ship and sets foot on deck or climbs inside, the skeletons animate and attack. While aboard this ship, the skeletons cannot be turned because they have nowhere to go (they do not go into the water). A cleric with a successful turning roll, however, is not attacked by the skeletons.

Skeletons (20): INT non-; AL N; AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1–6; SA nil; SD edged and piercing weapons only cause half damage; MR immune to *sleep, charm, hold,* and cold-based spells; SZ 5'3" tall (M); XP 65; *MM*/315.

Zombies (10): INT non-; AL N; AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 12 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1–8; MR immune to *sleep, hold,* death magic, poisons, and cold-based spells; ML special; XP 65 each; *MM*/373.

The ship can be searched from bow to stern, but not one bit of treasure is found. The greatest treasure, however, is the ship itself. It has been fitted with a special chair at the wheel, which is similar to a major spelljamming helm. A priest PC can sit in the chair and use his power to cause the ship to go forward, backward, submerge, or surface. The ship is turned left and right by using the pilot's wheel normally. The helm does not allow the ship to fly.

The priesthood of Umberlee used this ship to keep unwanted seaborne intruders away. A priest of at least 5th level captained the ship from the seat while one or more additional priests and the undead crew provided the muscle for boarding parties. It has been used only sparingly, as Umberlina has not wanted to attract attention to this grotto. Its two appearances to date, however, attracted the attention of the Lantanna.

The ship can only leave the grotto via an underwater cave to the north that cannot even be seen at low tide. Once the person at the chair concentrates on submerging the vessel, a bubble of air surrounds the vessel, and it will last a full crew (10 people) 30 minutes. Surfacing for just one round allows it to go back underwater for another 30 minutes. The boat has a movement rate of 12 underwater, and 24 when cruising on the surface.

The Tribute Gatherer

Just as the PCs are about to leave the lower level, they find out that the adventure is not quite over.

> Suddenly the water in this underground grotto starts bubbling. Bursting out of the water is a hideous monster. It is an enormous octopus-like seaweed-green colored creature with four tentacled appendages and a maw filled with black, glistening teeth.

This is a tribute gatherer, a special tanar'ri from Umberlee's layer of the Abyss (see sidebar). It has arrived in response to Umberlina's earlier call.

The tribute gatherer might be taken in by some story concocted by the PCs that its treasure has not yet arrived ("Just one more day, honest!"). This is up to the discretion of the DM, but he should consider such factors as: 1) whether the PCs have cleaned up the carnage from the previous battle; 2) whether the PCs are garbed and armed like the priests of Umberlee; 3) whether Umberlina is still lurking around from the earlier combat and can warn the gatherer; 4) if the PCs can give a good account of themselves (Gatherer: "I recognize none of you. Who are you, and where is Umberlina?"); and 5) anything else that might lessen credence to the PCs' story. If it is possible for the PCs to roleplay their way out of this encounter, the DM should exercise some latitude. On the other hand, if the gatherer arrives in the midst of PCs wearing holy symbols of good deities and bodies of Umberlee's priesthood and undead are floating around in the water, there is nothing more to do except roll initiative and proceed with combat.

Prior to the tribute gatherer arriving at the Grotto of the Queen, it stopped at a smaller temple to pick up treasure which is in the watertight pouch on its underside: 26 pp, 400 gp, 330 sp, 10 pieces of jewelry (total value 3,000 gp) and a *potion of treasure finding.*

If PCs flee the tribute gatherer, it sticks a long tentacle into the corridor (area **17**), opens the secret door (it is immune to *glyphs of warding* cast by clerics of Umberlee), takes the treasure, and swims away.

Concluding the Adventure

Returning to Lathtarl's Lantern is generally not a good idea, especially if the PCs are injured and in need of rest. If Sir Roderick was rescued, he advises the PCs that almost everyone in the village is evil and should be avoided until he can recover and return with a strong war party.

Sir Roderick does not know about the people being held for slavery, and if he hears about them, he wants to be healed and lead the PCs and the Lantanna in an effort to free them. The Lantanna want no part of this, but if a PC comes up with the idea of the Lantanna coming along and firing their arquebuses just to scare the outlaws off, they agree. This works after two volleys are fired: the evil inhabitants of Lathtarl's Lantern want no part of being on the receiving end of powder and shot, and they take off like hares running from the hounds. Any PC who comes up with this clever tactic should receive a 2,000 XP bonus.

The PCs can recover 10,000 gp of treasure in the form of art objects, trade goods, liquor, furnishings, and coins from the village, and all of it will be stowed on the *Spirit of Sambar.* The Lantanna insist on keeping at least half if they participated in the attack, or one quarter if they did not (transport fees). The treasure does not include the boats or belongings of the fisherfolk who live in Lathtarl's Lantern. They beg to be exempt from any looting by the PCs, and their request should be honored (Sir Roderick is firm on this point).

Rescued NPCs want their magical items and equipment back, and they ask the PCs to accompany them to Baldur's Gate so they can be properly rewarded. The Lantanna, grateful at the recovery of *Gond's Pride,* are happy to take the PCs there. (On the other hand, if the PCs steal the Lantanna's magical boat, they are pursued by the Lantanna, the Harpers, and other forces of good for the rest of their adventuring careers).

If the PCs go to Baldur's Gate, the Dukes of that city are grateful to the heroes for wiping out the Grotto and rescuing the NPCs. They award the PCs 1,000 gp each plus 250 gp for each NPC rescued. They also reward them with the magical items of the NPCs who did not survive the ambush of the priesthood (assuming these items were retrieved). These include the *long sword +2, mace +1,* three *potions of healing,* the vial of poison antidote, the *ring of protection +1,* and the *potion of water-breathing.* The Company of the Flaming Fist extend an invitation for the PCs to join.

continued on page 47

BZALLIN'S BLACKSPHERE

BY CHRISTOPHER PERKINS

Into the void

Artwork by Bradley K. McDevitt
Cartography by Rob Lazzaretti

Chris Perkins is a 28-year-old high school English and Math teacher who used his background in both subjects to create Bzallin's cubic lair. He'd like to dedicate this adventure to his parents Leona and Roger, his Aunt Adella, and long-time neighbor Mrs. Helen Tutt.

"Bzallin's Blacksphere" is a challenging high-level AD&D® adventure designed for 6–8 characters of levels 12–15 (about 90 total levels). The adventure begins in the frontier city of Horizon, but the DM may change the location to better suit his existing campaign. The party should contain a variety of character classes, although at least one mage and one priest is strongly recommended.

The DM should read this adventure thoroughly before refereeing it. Many of the adversaries are NPCs with considerable spell repertories and numerous magic items. To play these antagonists effectively, the DM should become familiar with their abilities and possessions. DMs are invited to remove or change any spells or magic items which are unfamiliar or unnecessary. The module features several monsters from the *PLANESCAPE® MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM®* (*PMC*) as well as creatures from the *MONSTROUS MANUAL™* (*MM*) and *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM Annual Volume I* (*MCA*). Also, the DM will require easy and immediate access to the *ENCYCLOPEDIA MAGICA™* Vols. I–IV.

Beginning The Adventure

The characters are summoned to the city of Horizon by its benevolent overseer, Glynn Palderus. Palderus has heard a great deal about the PCs' past exploits and needs their skills to save his city from total annihilation. Read or paraphrase the following:

> Welcome to Horizon — a beautiful city by the Bronze River delta on the edge of the wild frontier. You have been summoned here to meet with the city's overseer, Glynn Palderus. Horizon's city hall is easy to locate: a tall triangular building with three slender towers of white stone. The letter you received on the overseer's behalf was eloquent but urgent:
>
> *My adventurous friends,*
> *I speak on behalf of the citizens of Horizon, for our city is in dire need of your services. I hereby request an*

audience with you to discuss this urgent matter.

In brief, a foul magical curse has beset Horizon. We need your skill and experience to spare our city from the vengeance of a wizard bent on destroying everything we hold dear.

I eagerly await my messenger's return with news of your decision.

Will you concede to meet with me at Horizon's city hall, whereupon I will describe our precarious situation and petition for your aid?

Sincerely,
Glynn Palderus
Overseer of Horizon

The overseer is elated to see you in person. Palderus leads you to his office in one of the towers and draws your attention to a window, beyond which can be seen the avenues and market squares of the city. Horizon shines in the morning sun, but all is not well.

A hemisphere of impenetrable darkness has formed at the intersection of two main boulevards. According to Palderus, the hemisphere was approximately 1' in diameter when it first appeared three days ago. Its radius has since increased to approximately 20'. Palderus assures you that the hemispherical void is growing steadily, and no amount of magic has affected it. Nothing that enters the void emerges, and anything that passes through its outer rim is irresistibly drawn inside.

"I have consulted with Amazzar, our resident mage, and he believes the dreadful void is actually spherical. I believe he calls it a *sphere of annihilation,* although he admitted he had never seen one grow in size like this. According to Amazzar, the sphere utterly destroys anything absorbed into it. Many citizens believe the city has been doomed by the gods. Some have moved away, but most residents have nowhere else to go. Amazzar has other theories about its origin. He believes the sphere was created by a wizard named Bzallin, who once held the post of Horizon's wizard-protector before he vanished on some errand to the Outer Planes. Amazzar, his replacement, found some of Bzallin's old research notes hidden in the wall of his study. One of the notes described a "void of utter blackness" that could be controlled and used as a devastating weapon.

"If the sphere continues to grow at its present rate, Horizon will be consumed in fewer than seven days. Nothing would remain except a crater in the ground — and then there's no guarantee the sphere would stop increasing in size! Amazzar has asked to meet with you to discuss the matter further. Will you consent to this meeting?"

Characters who choose to inspect the *sphere* at closer range are free to do so. Except for its size, its powers and nature are identical to a standard *sphere of annihilation* (see *DMG,* page 180 or *ENCYCLOPEDIA MAGICA* page 1268, for details). Palderus insists that the PCs do nothing to the *sphere* until they have consulted with Amazzar.

Glynn Palderus knows very little about magic. He's a skilled politician with a genuine concern for his people; however, PCs wishing to learn more about the blacksphere must consult with Horizon's expert, Amazzar. If the PCs agree to a meeting, Palderus removes a delicate crystal rod from the top drawer of his desk. He then says, "With this rod, I will transport you safely to Amazzar's magic workroom." Palderus walks over to the PCs and touches each of them with the tip of the rod, speaking Amazzar's name (the rod's command word) each time the rod is used. Characters who allow themselves to be touched by the wand are immediately teleported to the "magic circle" rug in Amazzar's workshop. PCs who resist are allowed a saving throw vs. rod to avoid being teleported. The *crystal rod of teleporting* has 10 charges.

Glynn Palderus: AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 9; unarmed.

Part One: Amazzar's Workroom

Amazzar's workroom is a windowless chamber located in a tower attached to Horizon's library. There is no conventional means of entering this chamber, for there are no doors or windows. Amazzar uses *glassee* spells to render the ceiling transparent to the sky, thus allowing light to enter. He comes and goes via a permanent *phase door* set into one wall.

Magic cast upon the workroom protects it from *scrying* spells, *crystal balls, mirrors of mental prowess,* and similar items that infringe upon Amazzar's privacy. Read or paraphrase the following description of Amazzar's workroom when the PCs arrive:

With a touch of the crystal rod, you are instantly transported to a brightly-lit chamber with six walls. The ceiling rises to an apex nearly twenty feet above the tiled floor, and six triangular windows along the ceiling allow the morning sun to enter.

You are standing atop a beautiful embroidered rug that resembles a magic star. Ornate designs are sewn into the rug with gold and silver thread. Nearby are three rows of bookshelves packed with volumes of lore. Other furnishings include a round table, a wall shelf lined with spell components and various jars, a neatly-made bed with a black crow perched on one bedpost, a life-sized statue of a shocked-looking wizard, and two cluttered desks. Seated at one of the desks with his back to you is an elderly man wearing a skullcap. He is leafing through the pages of a thick tome.

The wizard seated at the desk is a *programmed illusion* of Amazzar. As an exercise in relaxation, the real wizard has polymorphed himself into a cat, rendered himself invisible, and climbed atop the nearest bookshelf to view his expected visitors. If the PCs try to get "Amazzar's" attention, the illusory mage continues to read his book (a cookbook written in Orcish) without distraction. If the PCs give up on him, they are free to inspect some of the room's contents (see "Workroom Features" below) before the real Amazzar makes his presence known. If the PCs try speaking with Amazzar's crow familiar, it stares at them vacantly, blinking in a disinterested manner. Meanwhile, Amazzar jumps down from the bookshelf and reverts to his true form.

Amazzar (17th-level human wizard): AL CG; AC 2; MV 9; W17; hp 41; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg by spell, wand, or weapon type; MR 30% (granted by ring); S 10, D 11, C 12, I 19, W 12, Ch 15; ML 12; *bracers of defense* AC 5, *ring of protection +3, ring of 30% magic resistance, robe of stars, wand of paralyzation* (58 charges), *wand of fire* (32 charges), *ioun stone* (absorbs 32 levels of spells from 1st–8th level), scroll with three *gate* spells (cast at 20th-level).

Amazzar's spells: *cantrip, comprehend languages, detect magic, identify, read magic; blur, detect invisibility, ESP, invisibility, know alignment; dispel magic, feign death, hold person, protection from normal missiles, spectral force* (already cast); *confusion, detect scrying, improved invisibility, polymorph self, wizard eye; contact other plane, dismissal, Mordenkainen's faithful hound, sending, teleport; monster summoning IV, Mordenkainen's lucubration, programmed illusion* (already cast); *Bigby's grasping hand, Mordenkainen's sword, spell turning; Otto's irresistible dance, polymorph any object.*

Amazzar's crow familiar: INT high; AL CG; AC 7 (*stoneskin* absorbs first 10 attacks); MV 1, fly 36 (B); HD 1/4; hp 2; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA eye peck (1 in 10 chance per attack); SZ T; ML 9; XP 15; *MM*/27 (bird).

Amazzar is friendly and approachable, and he takes his duty as Horizon's protector very seriously. He has spent the last several days (on and off) researching the nature of Bzallin's enlarging *sphere of annihilation*. Years ago, when he replaced Bzallin as the city's guardian, he found some dusty old notes tucked away in one of Bzallin's forgotten tomes. In these pages, Bzallin described how an ordinary *sphere of annihilation* could grow if it were fed energy from the Negative Material plane and linked via magical conduit to the Quasi-elemental Plane of Vacuum (which most wizards refer to as simply "the Void"). Apparently, Bzallin has succeeded in doing just that. Amazzar believes that Bzallin obtained a *sphere of annihilation* from somewhere in the Outer Planes, transported it to Horizon, and is using a device (perhaps a talisman of some sort, similar to an "ordinary" *talisman of the sphere*) to infuse the *sphere* with the energy needed to make it grow.

Origins of the Sphere

Amazzar and Bzallin were friendly rivals, always enticing each other with their spell research. The two wizards were not exactly friends, but they respected each other's intellect and abilities. Ten years ago, without explanation, Bzallin resigned as Horizon's wizard-protector, suggesting that Amazzar be offered the position in his stead. He removed his remaining possessions from the city and retired to his citadel in the Ruvean Forest. Days later, the citadel was besieged by fiends from the outer planes and left a crumbling ruin. Scouts from Horizon were sent to investigate the citadel after huge fires swept through the forest. A few of these scouts encountered minor fiends (such as lemures and nupperibo) outside the ruins. No clues pointed to Bzallin's whereabouts, and most people at first assumed he was driven away or, more likely, dragged off to the pits of Baator or some gloomy layer of the Abyss.

Amazzar has no clues to Bzallin's whereabouts, but he believes that Bzallin (or someone associated with him) is responsible for the blacksphere in Horizon. Why Bzallin would choose to destroy Horizon is unknown. As far as Amazzar is concerned, Bzallin has no enemies of consequence living within the city, and Glynn Palderus spoke of no hard feelings when Bzallin left his post. In any event, Amazzar hasn't had the time to give it much thought. (The true fate of Bzallin is fully described in "Part Two: Bzallin's Citadel.")

Bzallin's old notes provide little information to how the blacksphere was created; after all, these pages constituted only his preliminary research and not his most detailed work. Nevertheless, Amazzar recently procured a tome titled *Destructive Magics* which details *spheres of annihilation* among other things. From this tome, Amazzar has learned of three ways to destroy the *sphere*, taking into account the blacksphere's increasing size:

❖ Casting a *gate* spell on the blacksphere has a 50% chance of destroying it, a 35% chance of doing nothing, and a 15% chance of tearing the spatial fabric and annihilating everything within a 1d4-mile radius (including the remaining city and likely the surrounding farmland). Amazzar has procured a scroll with three *gate* spells for this contingency, but he use it only as a last resort (i.e., if the party fails).

❖ Touching the *sphere* with a *rod of cancellation* collapses the *sphere* but also triggers an explosion with a radius in yards 10 times greater than the blacksphere's radius in feet. (For example, if the sphere has a 15' radius, the explosion would have an approximate radius of 150 yards.) Everything caught in the blast sustains 3d6×10 hp damage. This is not a viable option given the size and density of Horizon's population.

❖ Amazzar believes that Bzallin has a magical device that controls the *sphere's* growth. The PCs could use this device to shrink the *sphere's* size and destroy it without jeopardizing the city. (See *Encyclopedia Magica*, page 1425, for details on the *talisman of the sphere* and the "Bzallin's Talisman" sidebar.

Based on the above information, Amazzar can think of only one way to stop the blacksphere without endangering innocent lives:

> "My attempts to locate Bzallin have failed. I ask that you travel to the ruins of Bzallin's citadel and search there for clues to his current whereabouts. Those who have visited the ruins in the past claim they are haunted, but don't let these rumors dissuade you.
>
> "Horizon's *sphere of annihilation* continues to grow at a slow but steady pace. It's only a matter of days before it engulfs the city. I believe the *sphere* was placed here by Bzallin himself, or by someone familiar with his research. I believe whoever is responsible has created a magical device that increases the *sphere's* diameter. If such an item exists, you must retrieve it. With the aid of this device, I'm certain I can reverse the growth of the *sphere* before it obliterates Horizon. Once we have restored the *sphere* to its original size, I can use a *gate* spell to destroy it with minimal damage to the surrounding city."

Once the PCs are informed of their quest, they may bid farewell to Amazzar and make preparations to visit Bzallin's citadel. Amazzar has a crystal rod in his desk similar to the one which Glynn Palderus used; if the PCs have no way to reach the citadel quickly, Amazzar offers to *teleport* them there. However, before the PCs have the chance to leave, Amazzar is "visited" by some unwelcome guests. Refer to "The Yugoloth Intruders" below.

Workroom Features

Amazzar's workroom contains many things of interest. Below are brief descriptions of the various furnishings and contents. PCs should not be given free access to Amazzar's possessions. However, if Amazzar is slain by Vzarro and his henchmen (see "The Yugoloth Intruders"), no one stops the characters from taking what they want.

❖ *Magic circle rug:* This handsome carpet is worth 12,000 gp intact. Chances are the rug is damaged or destroyed in the battle with Bzallin's yugoloths.

❖ *Chairs of comfort:* Amazzar's two chairs are both magical in nature. Anyone who sits in either chair feels comfortable beyond compare. Memorizing spells and meditating for lost PSPs takes half as long for someone who rests in the chair. Each chair is worth 4,500 gp intact.

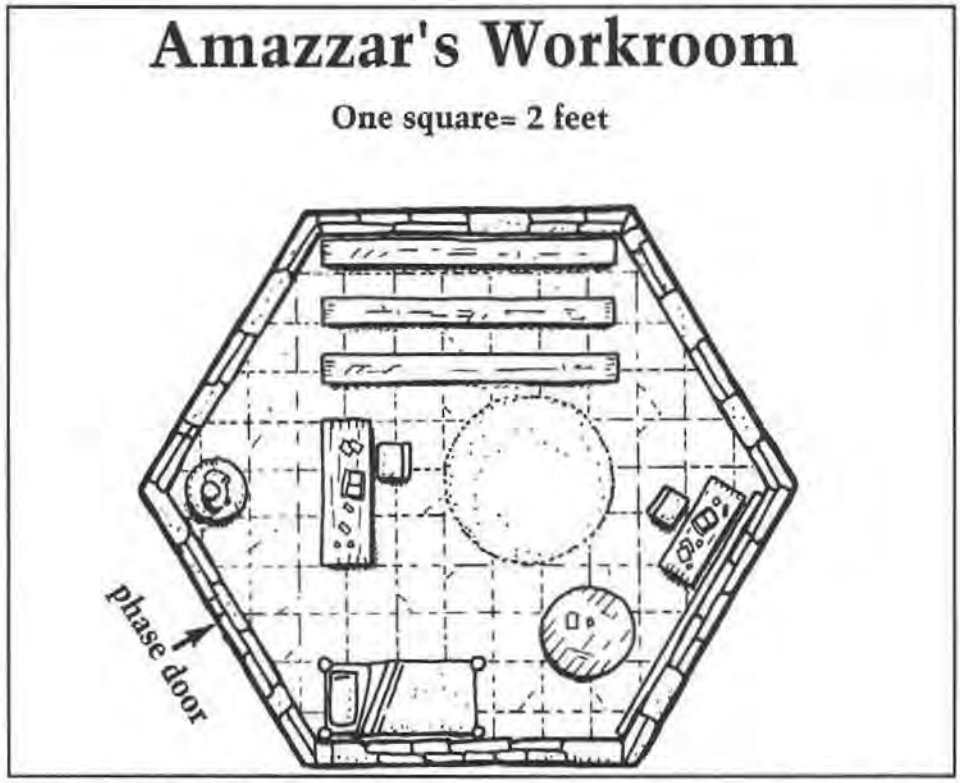
❖ Round table: This table has been enchanted with a permanent *animate object* spell, but only Amazzar knows the command words for activating and controlling it. Upon command, the table unhinges its six metal arms (hidden in the underside). Each arm grasps a *wand of magic missiles.* The table is also endowed with average Intelligence and can pick targets as it sees fit.

Attack table: INT average; AL N; AC 5; MV 12; HD 10; hp 45; THAC0 11; #AT 6 arms; Dmg 1d4 (×6) or by wand (×6); SA magic wands; SD immune to mind-affecting spells and cold-based attacks; treated against fire (–2 hp damage per die); SZ L; ML 16; XP 5,000; New monster; six *wands of magic missiles* (50 charges per wand).

❖ Amazzar's desks: These desks are ordinary but covered with sheafs of paper, ink jars, ornate paperweights, and other junk. Many of the inks are rare and quite valuable (1d100×10 gp per jar). There are eight jars in total. Buried with the junk in one desk is a crystal *rod of teleporting* (10 charges) similar to the one used by Glynn Palderus. Amazzar uses this *rod* to transport the party safely to Bzallin's ruined citadel if they so wish.

❖ Wall shelf: In addition to a vast assortment of spell components, this shelf contains the following potions: *aging, ambrosia, antidote* (all poisons), *anti-magic, clairvoyance, controlling damage, cold resistance, deftness* (increases Dexterity to 20), *brass dragon control, ethereality, extra-healing, fire resistance, good humor, human control, insulation, lightning form, luck, magic blocking, magic shielding, mind focusing, protection from immiscibility, regeneration, sobriety, stone form, useful appendages and vitality.*

❖ Bookshelves: There are literally hundreds of valuable tomes packed into these shelves. Included with the more benign books of lore are dozens of spell books, each one warded by a magical spell *(explosive runes, fire trap, Mordenkainen's sword, invisible stalker, feeblemind,* or *symbol of stunning).* Contained within these books are all the 1st–8th level spells described in the *PHB* plus 2d10 spells from the *Tome of Magic* (determined randomly by the DM).



❖ Statue: This is all that remains of Drellenor, a chaotic evil wizard who was petrified by Amazzar's *flesh to stone* spell. If he is restored to life, Drellenor is a 15th-level wizard with a full complement of spells, a *staff of wizardry* (31 charges), a *dagger of armor piercing,* a *dart of slaying planar monsters,* and a *ring of clear thought.*

❖ Four-poster bed: Amazzar's bed radiates magic thanks to a *Nystul's magic aura* spell. It is, in fact, an ordinary bed.

❖ *Phase door:* Only Amazzar may use this magical, invisible doorway. Removing the *phase door* requires a successful *dispel magic* cast against 17th-level magic.

The Yugoloth Intruders

Moments before the PCs conclude their meeting with Amazzar, the wizard's workroom is invaded by Vzarro the nycaloth and four *gated* mezzoloth henchmen. Using information given to him by Bzallin, Vzarro has pinpointed the location of Amazzar's workroom. Before confronting the wizard, Vzarro *polymorphs* himself into human-like form to confound his opposition. He and his mezzoloth thugs then use their *teleport without error* ability to appear in the middle of the chamber. Read or paraphrase the following when Vzarro and his henchmen arrive:

> Five threatening figures suddenly materialize in the middle of the room. Four of the intruders resemble seven-foot tall humanoid insects with chitinous plates covering everything but their glowing red eyes. These horned fiends are equipped with shields and various sharp weapons. Standing in the middle of this fierce pack is a fat, bearded human with small horns wearing wizard's robes and clutching a long metal staff.
>
> The intruders seem surprised to see you in Amazzar's company. Clearly they were hoping to catch the wizard alone. However, the human intruder wastes no time getting to the point. "I am Vzarro, emissary of the dark lich Bzallin. I have no quarrel

Bzallin's Talisman

Bzallin's *talisman of the sphere* is similar to others of its kind (see *DMG*, page 181 or *ENCYCLOPEDIA MAGICA*, page 1425 for fundamental properties). Bzallin's *talisman*, however, is a unique magical item designed by the lich to alter the size of a *sphere of annihilation*. The wearer of the *talisman* can attune the device to only one particular *sphere* at one time. Once this is done, the wearer has absolute, uncontested control over the *sphere* regardless of the distance separating them. If the wearer possesses a strong aura of negative energy (i.e., the wearer is an undead creature of 7 HD or greater), he can affect the growth of the *sphere* by establishing a ley line or conduit from the *sphere* to the Negative Material plane. This is a taxing endeavor that leaves the wearer perpetually fatigued, doubling the time it takes to rememorize spells (assuming he can cast them) and imposing a –1 initiative penalty in combat and a +1 penalty to spell casting times.

The *talisman* is treated as an artifact with regards to saving throws and durability. Against any magical attack, it saves on a roll of 2 or better (on a d20). It is impervious to virtually all forms of physical attack. However, one way to destroy the *talisman* is to crush it with a *hammer of thunderbolts* or a *maul of the titans*. The weapon must be wielded by an individual with storm giant Strength (25), and the *talisman* must be smashed atop an anvil of the gods. Another way to destroy the *talisman* is to throw it into a *sphere of annihilation*. Doing so not only destroys the *talisman* but also causes the *sphere* to collapse without destroying or damaging any of the nearby surroundings.

The *talisman* is flat, round amulet made almost entirely of platinum. Wizardly runes are embossed along the rim (providing the command words for attuning the *talisman* to a particular *sphere of annihilation*), and embedded in its center is a shiny black ball (black pearl) surrounded by a seven-pointed, star-shaped pattern. The pearl may be used to cast *identify* spells. As jewelry, the *talisman* is worth 17,500 gp.

with you (pointing to your group), so dare not stand in my way!"

Bzallin has sent the yugoloths to destroy Amazzar before the wizard finds some way to counter the *sphere of annihilation*. Bzallin may have bound the nycaloth to service, but Vzarro follows his orders grudgingly. The nycaloth deliberately lets it slip that Bzallin is a lich. If goaded, Vzarro is even willing to tell the PCs that the transformation to lichdom was necessary to operate the magical talisman which controls the *sphere*. This talisman, worn by Bzallin as an amulet, harnesses the negative energy of the lich to increase the *sphere's* size. (For details, see "Part Two" and "Part Three" as well as the "Bzallin's Talisman" sidebar.)

The nycaloth doesn't know whether destroying the talisman will have any effect on the blacksphere (it will). However, Vzarro knows that Amazzar's workroom is shielded against Bzallin's scrying, so he doesn't mind telling PCs that the *sphere* is merely a test. If Vzarro's words can be trusted, Bzallin plans to obtain another *sphere of annihilation* and plant it in a key planar city (probably Sigil). According to Vzarro, Bzallin has allied himself with a powerful fiend named J'zzalshrak. This monstrous fiend is bent on conquering the outer planes, and J'zzalshrak has promised Bzallin unlimited power for helping her destroy Sigil (an event which J'zzalshrak hopes will frighten her baatezu enemies into submission).

Vzarro imparts any or all of the above information on the assumption that the PCs will have enough information to track down Bzallin and destroy him. With the lich gone, Vzarro is no longer bound to service and may return to his home plane. If the PCs wish to leave Amazzar's workroom, the nycaloth allows them to do so. However, Vzarro has orders to return with Amazzar's corpse, and he has no intention of failing in his task.

Vzarro (polymorphed nycaloth): INT exceptional; AL NE; AC –6; MV 12, fly 36 (C); HD 11+22; hp 94; THAC0 9 (6 with weapon); #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 1d8+8/1d8+8 or weapon +8; SA spells, magical axe, bleeding; SD immune to acid, fire, poison, paralysis, electricity (from ring), and enchantment/charm spells; cold inflicts double damage; +2 or better weapons to hit; MR 70%; SZ L (9' tall) or M (human form); ML 16; XP 25,000; *PMC*/124 (yugoloth); *battle axe +3* (Dmg 2d8+11), *brooch of shielding* (absorbs 72 hp of *magic missile* damage), *ring of lightning resistance*.

Spell-like abilities usable at will (cast at 12th-level): *alter self, animate dead, cause disease, charm person, command* (3/day), *comprehend languages* (always active), *detect invisibility* (always active), *detect magic* (always active), *dimension door* (3/day), *dispel magic, enlarge* (or reverse, *reduce*), *fear* (by touch), *gate* (already cast), *improved phantasmal force, invisibility, mirror image* (3/day), *polymorph self, produce flame, project image, read magic* (always active), *reverse gravity* (once/day), *teleport without error, wind walk, word of recall* (once/day), *wraithform* (once/day).

Vzarro assumes his true form when combat erupts. His metal staff transforms into a wicked, two-bladed *battle axe +3*. If Amazzar attempts to reach his potions, Vzarro tries to negate their potency using *dispel magic*. He isn't too particular about whom he attacks or what he destroys to ensure Amazzar's demise. If reduced to 25 hit points, Vzarro uses his *word of recall* or *teleport without error* spell to return to Bzallin's lair, leaving his mezzoloths to fend for themselves. Note that "Vzarro" is the nycaloth's chosen name, not his real name, thus protecting him from Amazzar's *sending* spell.

Mezzoloths (4): INT low; AL NE; AC –1 (–3 with shield +1); MV 15; HD 10+20; hp 87, 81, 72, 70; THAC0 11; #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 1d6+6/1d6+6 or weapon +6; SA magical items, spells; SD +2 or better weapons to hit; immune to acid, fire, poison, paralysis, *charm* and *suggestion;* cold inflicts double damage; MR 50%; SZ M (7' tall); ML 14; XP 21,000; *PMC*/123 (yugoloth). Spell-like abilities (cast at 10th-level): *alter self, animate dead, burning hands, cause disease, cause serious wounds, charm person, cloudkill* (once/day), *darkness 15' radius, detect invisibility* (always active), *detect magic, dispel magic* (twice/day), *flame strike* (once/day), *gate* (1d4 mezzoloths with 40% chance of success), *hold person, improved phantasmal force, mirror image, produce flame, sleep, teleport without error, trip.*

The mezzoloths prefer to fight with their weapons. However, any mezzoloth without an opponent to fight casts its *flame strike* or *hold person* spell at the nearest foe.

Mezzoloth #1 employs a *long sword +1, +3* vs. spellcasters. It is also

equipped with a *shield +1* (lowering its AC to –3) and *gauntlets of specialization* (giving it +1 to hit and +2 on damage).

Mezzoloth #2 wields a *morning star +1* and wears a *ring of magic missile protection* (25 charges). Any such missiles cast at the mezzoloth are reflected back at the caster. This mezzoloth is also equipped with a *shield +1,* dropping its AC to –3.

Mezzoloth #3 fights with a *scimitar of vampiric regeneration +2.* Half the damage inflicted by this weapon (rounded down) is bestowed upon the wielder. The blade cannot raise the mezzoloth's hit point's above maximum.

Mezzoloth #4 wears a *ring of berserking* (10 charges), giving it one extra attack per round, +2 on damage rolls, and a +2 penalty to AC. Once berserk, the mezzoloth cannot stop attacking until it or its enemies are destroyed. The mezzoloth fights with a *mace of crushing +3* that inflicts 1d12+9 hp damage (1d12+11 with *ring of berserking*) per hit.

Amazzar's Actions

Amazzar is unwilling to leave behind everything in his workroom. He flees via the *phase door* (or *teleport* spell) only if reduced to 10 hp or fewer. Amazzar's magic rings provide adequate protection, while his *ioun stone* absorbs most (if not all) spell attacks directed at him. Amazzar knows that the yugoloths are immune to his *wand of paralyzation* and *wand of fire,* but he may attempt any of the following actions once combat erupts:

❖ Cast *blur* upon himself, imposing a –4 to hit penalty on his enemy's first attack and –2 to hit thereafter.

❖ Cast *Mordenkainen's sword* and direct the *shimmering blade* to attack the nearest yugoloth. The weapon can harm any of the yugoloths, attacking as a 9th-level fighter (THAC0 12) for either 5d6 hp damage (large-sized opponents) or 5d4 hp damage (man-sized opponents) per hit.

❖ Hurl one of the embroidered stars on his *robe of stars.* Each star is treated as a +5 weapon to hit, inflicting 2d4 hp damage.

❖ Cast his *confusion* spell upon the yugoloths. This spell has no effect on Vzarro, who is immune to enchantment/charm spells, but the mezzoloths must check against their magic resistance and make a saving throw if their resistance fails.

❖ Cast *Bigby's grasping hand* upon the most threatening yugoloth. The target creature is not entitled to a save, but the yugoloth may pass through the hand if its makes its magic resistance check. The hand has AC 0 and hit points equal to Amazzar's current total.

❖ Activate the attack table. Unknown to Amazzar, both Vzarro and Mezzoloth #2 have magical items that protect them from the table's *magic missile* damage.

❖ Imbibe one or more magic potions stored on the wall shelf. Amazzar drinks the potion of *protection from immiscibility* first, then quaffs the potions of *controlling damage* and *deftness.* Other potions may be selected as required.

❖ Cast *dismissal* upon one yugoloth. The yugoloth is entitled to a check vs. its magic resistance to negate the spell. If the resistance roll fails, the yugoloth is still entitled to a modified saving throw (see *PHB,* page 167, for details).

If Amazzar is slain by the yugoloths, Vzarro or one of the mezzoloths *animates* the corpse and *teleports* back to Bzallin's lair with it. Under this circumstance, Vzarro will "neglect" to mention his encounter with the PCs to Bzallin, hoping the party will eventually locate the lich and destroy him. Characters who fail to stop the yugoloths from stealing Amazzar's body encounter Amazzar's zombie later in the adventure. If Amazzar's familiar is slain, Amazzar must make a system shock roll or die, losing 1 point of Constitution even if the roll succeeds. See the wizard's *find familiar* spell for details.

Part Two: Bzallin's Citadel

Several years ago, while researching a powerful spell, Bzallin accidentally summoned an Abyssal lord named J'zzalshrak to his citadel. Rather than take offense, this horrifying fiend commended the wizard on his conjuration skill and tried to sway Bzallin to join her forces in the never-ending Blood War. Bzallin declined and eventually found a way to send J'zzalshrak back to her layer of the Abyss. However, J'zzalshrak needed strong allies, and over the years she tried to sway Bzallin with rare spell components and magical items taken from poor souls who perished in the Abyss. Bzallin gave each of J'zzalshrak's messengers the usual brush-off, although he kept many of her "gifts" for further study.

The pit fiend overlords of Baator caught wind of J'zzalshrak's generosity and, believing an alliance had formed between the tanar'ri and the wizard, sent a detachment of baatezu to destroy Bzallin's citadel. The baatezu wanted to send a clear message to other mages who would dare take sides in the baatezu/tanar'ri Blood War. Thinking the attack was unprovoked and cursing the loss of several potent spellbooks and magical items, Bzallin swore bloody vengeance against the baatezu, escaped via his *plane shift* spell, and accepted J'zzalshrak's offer. Using his magic and knowledge of spellcraft, Bzallin helped the tanar'ri wage war against the baatezu. Gradually his alignment switched from neutral to neutral evil to chaotic evil. He returned to Horizon briefly to reclaim some possessions he had left behind. After officially resigning as Horizon's wizard-protector, Bzallin relocated to the Abyss. By this time, he had devoted all his energies to fighting the Blood War.

To eliminate every shred of his past (and to satisfy some twisted sense of pleasure), Bzallin has chosen Horizon as a test site for his new "weapon." Once he was a benevolent wizard, but now Bzallin wants to erase that aspect of himself and prove to his new allies that he is wholly committed to chaos and evil.

One of the "gifts" that Bzallin obtained from J'zzalshrak was a necromancer's spell book titled *The Book of Vile Death.* Although necromancy was little more than a passing fancy, he decided he would use this book to turn himself into a lich. This decision was based on a plan that would give J'zzalshrak a decisive edge in the war. Bzallin's research into *spheres of annihilation* suggested that they may in fact be portals to the Quasi-elemental plane of Vacuum. His research also proposed that one could increase a *sphere's* size by infusing it with energy from the Negative Material plane. To this end, Bzallin crafted a special *talisman of the sphere* connected to the Void and "fueled" by negative energy. Only as a lich could he provide the *amulet* with the necessary supply of negative energy to expand the sphere. The "blacksphere" could be used to wipe out baatezu outposts and lawful evil portals throughout

the planes. Bzallin could even place the ever-growing *sphere* in Sigil and use this planar city as an example of what happens to those who oppose the tanar'ri.

Citadel Features

The ruined citadel is located in the heart of the Ruvean Forest atop a small hill. The citadel consists of five squat towers, four of which were destroyed when the army of vengeful baatezu besieged the structure. The fifth and northernmost tower remains intact due to powerful magic cast upon it.

The northern tower is shielded against transportive spells such as *passwall, phase door, teleport,* and *dimension door.* Such spells do not grant entry into the tower, nor do they function inside the tower. (The teleporter in area **5** is the only exception.) Astral and ethereal PCs may enter the structure, however, and *portable holes* operate normally. The tower is also protected against scrying *(crystal balls, clairvoyance* spells, and the like) and has 90% magic resistance against spells that might be used to damage it (such as *disintegrate* and *rock to mud* spells). Bzallin no longer resides in his citadel. However, PCs who explore the north tower thoroughly discover the secret teleporter (area **5**) which can transport them to Bzallin's current lair (see "Part Three").

Others who have visited the ruins in recent years believe the citadel is haunted. That is because Bzallin has commissioned a necromancer named Zhargaunt to guard the ruins against intrusion. In exchange, Bzallin has promised to give Zhargaunt the *Book of Vile Death,* which the lich no longer requires.

Zhargaunt and Company

The necromancer Zhargaunt is hidden in a glass *coffin of timelessness* buried under a layer of earth 50' north of the citadel. Time moves very slowly in the coffin, and each hour is equivalent to 1 day in the "real world." This enables Zhargaunt to maintain his watch for an extensive period of time. With his *ring of sustenance* activated inside the coffin, the necromancer can go for months without food. His dread wolves lurk in the woods around the hill. (Any closer and their rotting stench would be detectable.) Any humanoid creature approaching within 50' of the citadel triggers a powerful *warding* spell that alerts the necromancer and his wolves to the presence of trespassers.

Zhargaunt first tries to scare away the trespassers with his *whispering wind* spell, telling them in a sinister, hushed voice to "Leave this cursed place, or face death!" If they fail to heed his warning and enter the ruined towers or courtyard, Zhargaunt rises from his hidden coffin and mentally beckons his wolves to emerge from the woods. He also casts his *monster summoning IV* spell (summoning two juju zombies from area **3**) and/or his *summon shadow* spell.

Zhargaunt and the wolves attack anyone outside the citadel or inside the ruined towers. The necromancer does not concern himself with intruders in the courtyard (area **1**) or the north tower (areas **2–5**), as these areas have guardians of their own. Around his neck, Zhargaunt wears a black, claw-shaped iron key with a black gem clutched in its talons. This key deactivates the *avoidance* spell cast on the secret door to area **5,** and the characters will probably need it to reach the teleporter dais. Zhargaunt will not give up the key, not even in exchange for his

life. More than anything, he desires Bzallin's *Book of Vile Death* and will not let the PCs intimidate him. As a last resort, he uses his *magic jar* spell to transfer his life force to a black diamond receptacle (which he keeps on his person) then tries to possess the most powerful character within range.

Zhargaunt is a vile, emaciated figure with dark eye sockets and a twisted, black-toothed grin. He uses his *cloak of the bat* to fly about at night, spying on intruders from above. He uses his *rod of terror* to frighten away less threatening trespassers. Against more dangerous foes, he employs his dreaded *bonewand* (see the *ENCYCLOPEDIA MAGICA* tome, page 1476). PCs may mistake the necromancer for the lich Bzallin, and Zhargaunt does nothing to dissuade this perception. He attacks without mercy or remorse, using his most devastating spells first *(death spell, finger of death, death fog, cone of cold, lightning bolt,* and *enervation).* His *bracers of invincibility* protect against non-magical weapons.

Zhargaunt (14th-level human necromancer): AL NE; AC 0; MV 12, fly 15 (B) with magical cloak; W14 (specialist); hp 32; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon; I 17, W 16, Ch 6; SA opponents –1 to save vs. necromantic spells; SD +1 or better weapons to hit (imparted by magical bracers); ML 11; XP 11,000; *bracers of invincibility* (AC 0; wearer can only be harmed by magical weapons), *cloak of the bat, rod of terror* (37 charges), *bonewand* (19 charges; 6d4 hp damage or save for half; *animate dead* uses 2 charges), *ring of sustenance, potion of gaseous form, black diamond (magic jar* gem; worth 5,000 gp), magical iron key set with black gem (100 gp; deactivates magical ward in area 4). Zhargaunt receives a +1 bonus to all saves vs. necromancy magic.

Zhargaunt's spells: *burning hands, chill touch* (×2), *detect undead, gaze reflection, unseen servant; darkness 15'radius, fog cloud, Melf's acid arrow* (×2), *spectral hand, whispering wind; feign death, gust of wind, lightning bolt, phantom steed, vampiric touch* (×2); *dimension door, Evard's black tentacles, contagion, enervation* (×2); *animate dead, cone of cold, magic jar, summon shadow, teleport; death fog, death spell, monster summoning IV; control undead, finger of death.*

Zhargaunt's spell book is hidden inside the *coffin of timelessness.* The necromancer will not voluntarily divulge its location, although *ESP* and similar spells may pry the information from him. A *detect magic* cast in the vicinity pinpoints the magical coffin. Any PC who opens the book releases a spectre that fights until turned or destroyed. (If the book is opened in broad daylight, the spectre remains non-corporeal until nightfall, at which point it materializes and attacks.) The book contains all of Zhargaunt's memorized spells plus *detect magic, detect invisibility, detect scrying, read magic, summon swarm,* and *true seeing.*

Dread wolves (12): INT average; AL NE; AC 6; MV 18; HD 4+4; hp 32, 30, 29 (×3), 27, 23, 22 (×2), 19, 18 (×2); THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10; SA bite causes disease; SD regenerate 3 hp/round; MR immune to *charm, hold,* and cold-based spells; electricity-based spells inflict half damage; SZ S (4' long); ML 18; XP 650; *MCA* (wolf, dread).

Dread wolves continue to fight until reduced to –10 hp; they regenerate until reduced to double their maximum hit point totals. Dread wolves cannot be turned while Zhargaunt is controlling them; if he is killed, the wolves may be turned as ghasts. If Zhargaunt is attacked, held or cornered, the wolves ignore their current targets and rush to their master's aid.

Spectre: INT high; AL LE; AC 2; MV 15, fly 30 (C); HD 7+3; hp 52; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA energy drain (two levels); SD +1 weapons needed to hit; immune to poison and paralysis; MR immune to *sleep, charm, hold* and cold-based spells; SZ M; ML 15; XP 3,000; *MM*/323. The spectre guards Zhargaunt's spell book.

Approaching the Citadel

If the PCs allow Amazzar to *teleport* them to Bzallin's citadel, they materialize inside the courtyard (area **1**) and are promptly attacked by the earth weirds within. If the characters approach via their own means, they must either enter the citadel by flying into the courtyard, walking through the open entrance, or climbing over the rubble. The following description may be used regardless of the party's method of approach:

> Bzallin's ruined citadel is contained by a high circular wall of mortared stone. Five towers are evenly spaced along its northern perimeter. The southwest tower has been reduced to a pile of rubble, while three other towers suffer from collapsed ceilings and gaping holes. The northernmost tower stands taller than the wall and remains perfectly intact. The tower's entrance is blocked by a pair of scorched bronze doors.

1. Courtyard.

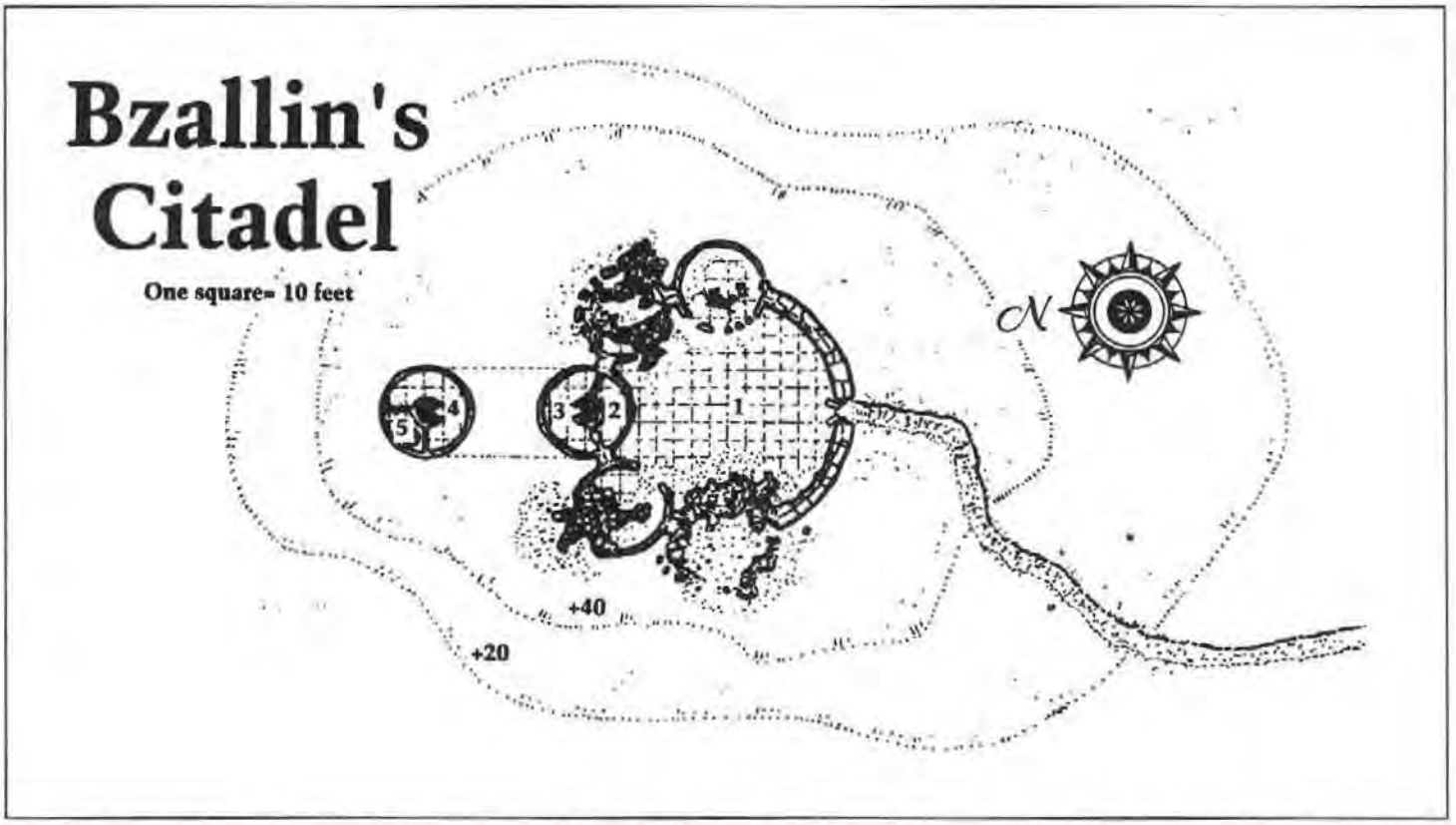
> This circular courtyard has a grassy floor, and its perimeter is lined with debris and rubble from the collapsed towers. The thick wooden doors which once secured the south courtyard entrance have been badly scarred by fire and knocked to the ground.

Characters who stand in the courtyard for more than two rounds arouse four earth weirds. The weirds are hostile toward all intruders save Zhargaunt the necromancer and residents of Bzallin's Cube (see "Part Three"). A *detect invisibility* spell cast in the courtyard reveals something amiss, but nothing specific can be determined until the weirds begin to take shape. Intruders have one advantage: the weirds take two rounds to assume their fighting forms, providing an opportunity to flee or gain initiative. The weirds do not pursue foes beyond the courtyard's confines.

Earth weirds (4): INT very; AL CE; AC 0; MV 9; HD 8+3; hp 60, 56, 51, 48; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA smothering (automatic 1d8 hp damage per round; successful bend bars roll required to free oneself); SD normal edged and blunt weapons inflict 1 hp damage/hit; immune to normal piercing weapons; reforms in four turns if reduced to 0 hp (completely destroyed at –10 hp); SZ L (10' long); ML 14; XP 5,000; *MCA* (elemental, earth weird).

A *wind wall* or *control winds* spell inflicts 1d10 hp damage against an earth weird. A weird subjected to a *pass-wall* or *move earth* spell (or a magical item that involves digging) is instantly destroyed, while a *dig* spell inflicts 8d6 hp damage (save vs. spell for half).

2. Tower Entrance. The bronze double doors leading to the tower are *wizard locked* at 19th-level. The doors can withstand 250 hp of damage before sundering. If the PCs manage to bypass or dispel the *wizard lock,* they must still contend with a magical trap. Inside the tower, positioned on either side of the



entrance, are two wizard statues. Each statue is carved in Bzallin's human likeness and appears to be gesturing as if to cast a spell. Any character passing between the statues is struck by two spells: *feeblemind* and *confusion*. Two separate saving throws are required.

The statues are immovable and positioned 3" from the outside wall. Avoiding the trap requires the PCs to enter the chamber without flying over or passing between the statues. PCs who can assume gaseous form or *wraithform* can slip around the statues by staying close to the outside wall. *Animate rock* spells may be used to move the statues farther from the wall. Duo-dimension spells will also work, but transportive spells such as *blink, dimension door,* and *teleport* spells do not (see "Citadel Features" for details). A charge from a *wand of negation* has a 80% chance of permanently dispelling the magic of one statue, while a *transmute rock to mud* spell destroys a statue while simultaneously nullifying its magic. An *anti-magic shell* provides complete protection against the statues.

Save for the statues, the chamber beyond the double doors is empty and unfurnished. The door leading to area **3** is unlocked.

3. Undead Garrison. The floor of this chamber is littered with the remnants of broken shelves, shattered glass, and smashed furniture. A dusty spiral staircase ascends to area **4.**

A *detect invisibility* spell, *gem of true seeing,* or similar magic reveals the presence of several invisible humanoids in this area. In fact, Bzallin has placed 15 juju zombies along the outer wall. (If Zhargaunt used his *monster summoning IV spell,* there are only 13 zombies present.) These juju zombies obey the flameskulls in area **5** and Zhargaunt the necromancer. Thanks to Bzallin's *improved invisibility* spell, these zombies remain invisible even when attacking (giving them a –4 bonus to their AC). If intruders enter the room and no alarm has been sounded, the juju zombies do not attack until one of them is touched or wounded.

Juju zombies (15): INT low; AL NE; AC 6 (2 while invisible); MV 9; HD 3+12; hp 32, 30 (×2), 29 (×2), 26, 25 (×4), 23, 22 (×3), 20; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 3d4; SA crossbows; SD +1 or better weapons to hit; half damage from blunt and piercing weapons; climb walls (92%); impervious to poison, paralysis and psionics; MR immune to *sleep, charm, hold, fear,* cold-based spells, electrical-based spells, *magic missiles* and illusions; SZ M; ML 20; *MM*/373 (zombie); heavy crossbow, *bolt of paralyzation* (+1 to hit; target must save vs. paralysis or be paralyzed for 1d6 rounds).

Each zombie carries a heavy crossbow loaded with a magical bolt. Once the bolts are fired, the zombies discard their crossbows in favor of attacking with their claws.

4. Bzallin's Old Study. Bzallin stripped this chamber bare when he withdrew to his new lair. The only remaining furnishings are two cracked work tables, a pair of dusty hanging lanterns (positioned above the tables), and four 5'-long iron tapestry rods mounted along the outer wall.

A secret door leads to Bzallin's teleporter chamber (area **5**). However, the secret door has an *avoidance* spell cast upon it. Any PC carrying the iron key formerly in Zhargaunt's possession can approach the door safely, and once the door is pushed open the *avoidance* spell is temporarily deactivated. There is no other way to approach the door unless Bzallin's *ward* (cast at 19th-level) is dispelled or the door is utterly destroyed. (The effects of *disintegrate*

and *rock to mud spells* within the tower are outlined in "Citadel Features.") A *portable hole* allows characters to pass through the nearby wall without having to approach the secret door. Note that *passwall, phase door,* and similar spells do not function inside the tower.

5. Teleportation Chamber. The only permanent fixture in this curved chamber is a circular stone dais 9' in diameter. Painted on the surface of the dais is a purely decorative pattern, although the dais does radiate alteration magic whenever a *detect magic* spell is cast. To activate the teleporter, a PC need only speak Bzallin's name while standing on the dais. Doing so teleports the PC to a similar dais in area **1** of the "Lair of the Lich."

Guarding this chamber are five flameskulls. Four of these flying skulls are fashioned from human heads. The fifth skull is much larger and once belonged to a horned baatezu named Kraldrac. Flames engulf all five skulls, and flameskulls can spew fire twice per round (10' range) for 2d4 hp damage per gout. Flameskulls continue to regenerate after they are destroyed unless an *exorcise, dispel magic,* or *remove curse* spell is cast on the shattered remains or the remains are thoroughly doused in holy water.

If the flameskulls are fighting a losing battle, one of them moves to the dais, teleports to Bzallin's abode, and warns the lich of the party's impending arrival. Another flameskull tries to fetch the juju zombies in area **3.**

Kraldrac's flameskull: INT high; AL LE; AC 2; MV 21 (A); HD 8+8; hp 63; THAC0 11; #AT 2 plus special; Dmg 2d4/2d4; SA spells, shriek; SD as normal flameskull (see below); MR 88%; SZ M; ML 16; XP 9,000; *MCA* (flameskull, variant).

Kraldrac's skull can emit a terrible shriek at the beginning of any round, before any attacks are made. This shriek makes spellcasting 90% impossible (barring the use of a *silence 15' radius* spell), inflicts 1d4 hp damage on living creatures within 10', and shatters any unprotected glass within a 30' radius (save vs. crushing blow allowed). When not screaming, spitting fire or reflecting spells, the baatezu's skull can cast one of the following spells per round (at 15th-level of ability): *lightning bolt, power word stun,* and *feeblemind.*

Flameskulls (4): INT exceptional; AL LE; AC 3; MV fly 21 (A); HD 4+4; hp 35, 31, 26, 24; THAC0 15; #AT 2 plus special; Dmg 2d4/2d4; SA spells; SD spell reflection; regenerate 1 hp/round; immune to *sleep, charm, hold* and other mind-affecting spells; immune to fire, cold and electricity; MR 88%; SZ S; ML 13; XP 2,000; *MCA.*

Provided they are not using their spell reflection ability, these flameskulls have the ability to cast one of the following spells each round (at 5th-level): *magic missile, color spray,* and *fireball.*

Part Three: Lair of the Lich

Bzallin's lair is located in a spatially-warped, extra-dimensional pocket plane. This wrap-around complex of subterranean chambers conforms to the shape of a cube. This design is deliberate, as it allows Bzallin to move quickly to areas that would otherwise be isolated and distant. The cube was created with the aid of Bzallin's ally, J'zzalshrak. This beetle-like tanar'ri has beefed up Bzallin's roster with a few tanar'ri guardians.

Not only has Bzallin pledged loyalty to the tanar'ri but also he and J'zzalshrak have begun training wizards for front-line duty in the Blood War. Most of these fatalistic "hopefuls" were drafted from various strongholds throughout the planes. Bzallin is providing them with the knowledge and resources to harness their destructive potential and plans to use their spell power to augment J'zzalshrak's tanar'ric forces.

If possible, the DM should avoid revealing the cube-like nature of Bzallin's complex. Players will begin to realize something is amiss when they unexpectedly re-enter an area they've already explored.

To succeed in their quest, the characters must confront Bzallin and obtain his *talisman of the sphere.* The *talisman* acts as a conduit between the lich and the blacksphere, harnessing Bzallin's negative energy to expand the size of the *sphere.* Stealing the *talisman* should be enough to halt the blacksphere's growth. Each hour the amulet remains apart from the lich (or any powerful conduit of negative energy, for that matter), the *sphere* shrinks by 5% of its current size. The *sphere* stops shrinking when reduced to a diameter of 12" (at which point Amazzar, if he is alive, can destroy it safely using a gate spell). If the *talisman* is hurled into the *sphere of annihilation,* the *sphere* collapses (without damaging the city) and the *talisman* is lost forever.

If one of the flameskulls managed to warn the lich of the party's impending assault, Bzallin takes measures to protect himself and the *talisman.* The *talisman's* steady drain leaves the lich fatigued, so he places the nycaloth Vzarro in charge of security, assuming the yugoloth survived the encounter in "Part One." Assisting Vzarro is one of J'zzalshrak's agents — a babau named Koroxon — who oversees security in Vzarro's absence.

Notable Cube Features

Bzallin's complex is carved out of an unfamiliar smoke-colored stone resembling polished marble. The floor tiles are colored differently from room to room, laid out in twisted mosaics and jagged patterns. Most of the rooms in Bzallin's Cube have 20' high ceilings illuminated by *continual light* spells. The corridors are lit in a similar fashion with ceilings 15' high. Characters who try to burrow or move through the floor, ceiling, or walls are blocked after 10' by an impenetrable *wall of force* which completely encases the Cube. This indestructible shell is 100% resistant to magic and physical damage, for beyond these barriers lies the Void (the quasi-elemental plane of Vacuum).

All normal doors are made from a strong greenish wood. The doors are fitted with oversized iron hinges, and each door can withstand 100 hp damage before splitting. None of the doors have locks, but Bzallin can *wizard lock* them simply by casting his *guards and wards* spell (see "Guards and Wards" below as well as the *PHB,* page 178).

Transportive spells such as *teleport, phase door,* and *shadow door* (and items which duplicate their effects) do not function if used to move individuals or objects into or out of Bzallin's Cube. These spells function normally if employed within the confines of the Cube. For instance, Bzallin could *teleport* himself from his study (area **31**) to another location within the lair, but not to a location outside the Cube. The Cube is also closed to the Astral and Ethereal planes. There are several ways to enter or leave the Cube: the teleporter dais in area **1,** a *plane shift* spell, a magical *gate,* or a *cubic gate* (see area **22**).

The ranges of all divination-type spells cast within the Cube are restricted to the room or corridor in which the spell is cast. Peering into other planes from within the Cube is not possible, except within certain areas as noted. The Cube cannot be spied on from any source external to it except where noted otherwise.

Most importantly, priests cannot recover any spells above 2nd-level while they are inside the Cube. This is due to the Cube's extra-planar construction (cutting the priests off from their respective deities). Wizards can recover their spells normally.

Lastly, all of the intelligent inhabitants of Bzallin's Cube are familiar with the layout of the complex. They will use their knowledge of the lair to every possible advantage when confronted by a powerful, invasive force such as the PCs.

Guards and Wards

When Bzallin becomes aware of intruders inside the Cube, he first uses his *crystal ball* with *clairaudience* to determine the party's location, then casts his *guards and wards spell*. The spell has the following effects:

- All doors are *wizard locked* at 19th-level.
- All corridors become misty, and visibility is reduced to 10'. A *gust of wind* clears the mist for one round before the it fills the corridor again.
- Whenever confronted by a choice in direction, the PCs are 50% likely to take the opposite path to what they intended. For instance, given a choice of turning left or right, a character might turn left thinking he has turned right.
- Everything inside the Cube radiates magic, making *detect magic* spells useless when cast by those under 19th-level.
- A powerful *suggestion* is placed upon the door to area **31**, affecting the first PC to approach within 10' of the portal. The suggestion is simply: "Guard this door and kill any living being that tries to open it." (The lich does not count as a "living being," nor does his undead shadow fiend servant, unseen servants, and automatons.) A successful saving throw at –8 negates the effect. (The saving throw penalty is normally –4, but the potency of the *suggestion* is augmented by Bzallin's *robe of the archmagi.)*

The *guards and wards* spell makes it difficult for some of the Cube's residents to move about the complex. For the most part, they remain in predetermined areas until confronted by intruders, at which point they attack. Some exceptions include apprentices with *knock* spells and fiends with the ability to cast *teleport* or *dimension door* spells. The DM may wish to stage a few random encounters with Bzallin's apprentices and Koroxon the babau in the misty corridors of the Cube!

1. Dais and Statues. Read the following when the PCs first arrive, assuming they appear atop the teleporter dais:

> From the dusty tower chamber of Bzallin's ruined citadel, you are transported to a large, well-lit room with a high vaulted ceiling, a tiled mosaic floor, and three alcoves. Placed in the alcoves are life-sized renderings of three horrific fiends, each one carved from dark green stone.

The three statues are actually petrified hamatula — victims of Bzallin's *flesh to stone* spell. Bzallin displays them as trophies, reinforcing his allegiance to the tanar'ri. PCs who restore these fiends to life are mistaken for Bzallin's allies and attacked without deliberation. If the PCs can restrain the baatezu long enough to prove they are enemies of the lich, there's a base 5% chance (modified by 1% per point of the party's collective Charisma) that a tentative alliance can be formed with the hamatula, assuming the PCs live up to their claims. Statistics for the hamatula may be devised if they become necessary.

If Bzallin is warned of the PCs impending arrival and has a full turn to prepare, he dispatches two apprentices (Dragen and Malloch from area **30**) to subdue or destroy the interlopers. These wizards are joined by six juju zombies (three per mage, taken from area **28**) who follow their masters' orders without question. Dragen and Malloch use their *invisibility 10' radius* spells to conceal themselves and the juju zombies, attacking as the PCs step down from the dais. If the battle turns against the wizards, they retreat to area **30,** using their *knock* spells (if necessary) to get through the door.

PCs can return to Bzallin's citadel by stepping onto the dais and uttering the command word, "J'zzalshrak." An *identify* spell cast upon the dais or a successful *ESP* spell cast upon one of the Cube's occupants reveals the proper command word.

2. Spider Construct.

> Hanging on the walls of this chamber are four huge tapestries depicting scenes of carnage. Hordes of baatezu and tanar'ri are portrayed in scenes of fiery battle, dismemberment, and devastation. In the middle of the chamber stands a tall metal spider with razor-sharp mandibles, eight jointed legs, and four crystal lenses for eyes. Tightening bolts on top of the contraption is a grimy little man with a large nose, wearing a gleaming metal vest. Next to him is a hatch that descends into the metal spider.

The tapestries depict scenes of the Blood War and are valued at 4,000-8,000 gp each. They weigh 150 lbs. apiece.

The metal spider is a magically-powered construct, built by Bzallin with the aid of several enslaved svirfneblin. It is manned by a *charmed* svirfneblin named Garaflix who controls the spider's attacks and movements by a series of iron levers. The spider's movements are somewhat awkward, but its legspan allows it to cross the chamber quickly. It can move and attack in the same round and is just small enough to enter 10' wide corridors. It cannot fit through doorways, however. The metal spider is equipped with an acid sprayer (20' range; enough acid for 50 shots) and a *wand of viscid globs* (25 charges each). Garaflix uses the *wand* to snare victims, then moves forward to strike with the spider's hooked forelegs and mandibles. The spider's acid is strong enough to free victims trapped by the viscid globs.

Garaflix the svirfneblin enters and exit via a hatch on the spider's "back." When he spots intruders, the gnome scurries into the contraption, bolts the overhead hatch, and activates the spider. (This takes one round.) The interior is not large enough to accommodate anyone larger than a gnome or halfling. The spider is not air-tight, and the driver is afforded no protection against gas attacks. The spider sustains full damage from electrical attacks, but the driver is insulated and protected from residual damage. Garaflix has limited vision through the four crystal windows

and cannot see opponents in the rear or rear flanks. The crystal windows have *glassteel* spells cast upon them, rendering them unbreakable.

Metal spider: INT non-; AL nil; AC 0; MV 15; HD 18; hp 128; THAC0 17 (as driver); #AT 3 (two legs/1 bite); Dmg 1d8/1d8/1d10; SA black dragon acid spray (3d6+4 hp damage; save vs. breath weapon for half), *wand of viscid globs;* SD immune to fire, cold, mind-affecting attacks, corrosion and non-magical weapons; SZ L (8' diameter); ML nil; XP 13,000; New monster. If the spider is reduced to 25 hp or less, it has a 15% chance per round of malfunctioning and becoming inoperable.

Garaflix (svirfneblin): INT exceptional; AL NG *(charmed);* AC 2 (cannot be struck inside spider); MV 6; HD 3+6; hp 22; THAC0 17; #AT 1 (3 with darts); Dmg by weapon type; SA stun darts; SD surprised only on a 1 on d10; immune to illusions; save at +3 (+2 vs. poison); MR 20%; SZ S; ML 17 while charmed (11 normally); XP 420 (for rescue only); *MM*/150 (gnome); mithril scale armor (AC 2), short sword, six stun darts (40' range; +2 bonus to hit; save vs. poison or be stunned for one round and slowed for the next four rounds).

If freed of his *charm,* Garaflix happily joins the party and aids them any way he can. The svirfneblin is a master craftsman and can built just about anything with few tools and a little ingenuity.

3. Kitty's Black Ball.

Two padded sofas and three plush armchairs are placed around a circular rug in the middle of the room. Watching you with disinterest are two gray cats wearing shiny silver bell-collars. These felines are nestled in the corners of a sofa. A third cat is playing with a small black ball on the rug.

Four doors lead from this chamber. A 3" diameter hemispherical indentation is carved into the wall next to each door. To open a door safely, the PCs must take the cats' "black ball" and place it in the indentation. Doing so causes the door handle to glow for three rounds, during which time the door may be opened safely. Any PC who otherwise touches a door is struck by a *feeblemind* spell (save vs. spell at –4 to resist effect). Bzallin's apprentices are equally susceptible to the trap, but they know enough to use the black ball for safe passage. The ball is made of a lightweight, virtually indestructible metal with no other special properties.

The four cats are really hezrou tanar'ri. They assume their true forms if attacked or if the PCs try to take the black ball. The hezrou wear *iron collars of polymorphing* (which duplicate the 4th-level *polymorph self* spell) and use *walls of fire* to bar the exits if they wish to trap the PCs inside the chamber.

Hezrou (3): INT average; AL CE; AC –6; MV 12; HD 9; hp 62, 60, 55; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/4d4; SA bearhug (2d4 hp/round), stench; SD +2 weapons needed to hit; half damage from other non-magical attacks; never surprised; tanar'ri immunities; MR 70%; SZ L; ML 17; XP 14,000; *PMC*/102 (tanar'ri, true); Spell-like abilities (cast at 9th-level): *animate object, blink, darkness 15' radius, duo-dimension* (3 /day), *gate* (4d10 dretch; 50% chance of success; see area **25** for statistics), *infravision, produce flame, protection from normal missiles, summon insects, teleport without error, unholy word, wall of fire.*

4. Supplies Storage. This chamber contains two long shelves. The lower shelf is lined with blankets, linen sheets and towels. The upper shelf is covered with stacks of loose parchment, stoppered jars of ink (various types), quills, blank 50-page spellbooks, and empty scroll tubes. The DM may determine the exact number and nature of these mundane items.

5. The Crystallized Ones.

Placed in the corners of this room are six transparent, crystalline statues depicting female warriors in plate mail wearing helmets and artificial wings.

The statues are the petrified remains of six clerics of the Illuminati, an obscure lawful good order that was obliterated while trying to invade J'zzalshrak's layer of the Abyss. The clerics have been crystallized by a *flesh to stone spell.* If freed, these zealous NPCs insist that the PCs help them destroy Bzallin, his apprentices, and their tanar'ri allies. PCs who refuse are ridiculed and scorned, but not attacked.

Yalexi, Quay, Alikara, Nhem, Traekal, and Suris (5th-level human priestesses): AL LG; AC 1; MV 12; P5; hp 40, 33, 31, 30, 25, 24; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SA *entanglement* (with rope); W 16; ML 15; *plate mail +1, wings of flying, footman's mace +1, rope of entanglement.* Spells: *cure light wounds* (×3), *detect magic, sanctuary; aid, detect charm, hold person* (×2), *resist fire; remove paralysis.*

6. The Aballin Pool.

Most of this area is taken up by a wading pool of crystal clear water. The pool is enclosed by white marble rim, and the floor is tiled with patterns of blue and green. Hanging on one wall is a horrid tapestry depicting fiends swimming in a river of blood. Two stone benches are positioned near the walls.

The shallowness of the pool is a permanent illusion concealing its true depth of 10'. A *true seeing* spell will penetrate the illusion and reveal the treasure hidden at the bottom (see below). Living within the pool are five aballins that keep their presence secret until an intruder tries to drink the water, immerse in the pool, extract a water sample, or retrieve the treasure. The aballins are intelligent, and they've been trained not to attack the residents of Bzallin's Cube. The aballins allow such individuals to bathe in the pool and remove water as they see fit.

Aballins attack with watery pseudopods which form instantaneously. A successful attack roll indicates the victim has been dragged underwater. (See "Holding Your Breath" in the *PHB* for drowning rules.) Aballins can pull themselves from the water in a semi-gelatinous state if necessary, although they are loathe to do this.

Aballins (5): INT average; AL N; AC 4; MV 6, swim 15; HD 3; hp 24, 21 (×2), 18, 15; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg special; SA drowning; SD +1 blunt weapons needed to hit; immune to edged weapons; immune to fire, cold, electricity, poison, and paralysis; *transmute water to dust* kills an aballin (save vs. death magic allowed); *lower water* forces aballin to release its victim (save vs. spell allowed); MR immune to spells relying on vision *(color spray, blur, invisibility, illusions,* etc.); SZ L (10' long); ML 14; XP 270; *MCA.*

Hidden at the bottom of the pool is the aballins' treasure: 583 gp (loose), a *dagger +1* with a squid-shaped handle (imparts *water breathing* upon its wielder), a suit of elven *chain mail +2,*

a *medium shield +1*, a blue crystal *key of opening* (14 charges; any locked object it touches has a 75% chance of opening), and a *ring of depetrification* (13 charges; restores victims of *flesh to stone spells*).

7. Flaming Doors.

> The three doors that lead from this chamber are painted with the picture of a salamander standing in a pool of fire and clutching a black, two-pronged pitchfork. The room itself is empty save for the decorative, star-shaped mosaic on the floor.

All three doors are magically trapped from this side. Anyone who touches a door without first uttering the proper command word ("Koroxon") is magically burned for 11d4 hp damage (save vs. spell for half damage). The flames spring from the mouth of the salamander painting and continue to burn the victim until smothered or doused.

8. Jillian's Quarters. This 10' × 20' chamber contains a carved stone bed belonging to Koroxon's lieutenant, an 8th-level alu-fiend fighter named Jillian (area **9**). The walls are lined with eight metal shields adorned with spikes, horns, and hideous visages. One of the shields is shaped in the likeness of the Abyssal lord Fraz-Urb'luu; any non-tanar'ri who touches this shield is cursed with a permanent inability to speak truthfully. A *remove curse* spell, *limited wish*, or *ring of truth* negates the effect.

9. Armory and Storage. Jillian occupies this chamber. Her innate intuition warns her of impending danger 75% of the time. If she senses the approach of intruders, the hateful alu-fiend *shapechanges* into a young human female and plays her role to the hilt, claiming that she was lured to Bzallin's Cube by the nycaloth Vzarro and coerced into becoming a servant for Bzallin's apprentices. Familiar with the layout of the Cube, she leads the party to the nycaloth (area **13**) where she hopes one or the other will be destroyed.

Jillian is searching the chamber for a suitable dagger to add to her personal arsenal. (She recently lost her old dagger on an excursion and needs to replace it.) If disguised as a human servant, she claims to be searching for a dagger that she wrongfully placed with the others in storage. (The dagger supposedly belongs to Raxalla in area **29.**) Jillian is ambidextrous and possesses the blind-fighting proficiency. She also wields two weapons simultaneously without penalty. She uses her *charm* and *suggestion* spells to coerce her enemies into surrendering and reserves her *dimension door* spell for quick escapes. She likes to stalk her enemies, using the mist-filled corridors of Bzallin's Cube and carefully-laid *darkness* spells to conceal her presence.

Jillian (8th-level alu-fiend fighter): AL CE; AC –5; MV 12, fly 15 (D); F8; hp 63; THAC0 13 (12 with specialization); #AT 5/2 per weapon; Dmg by weapon +1 (Strength), +2 (weapon specialization); SA spell use; SD cold iron or magical weapons needed to hit; intuition; *infravision* to 240'; tanar'ri immunities; MR 30%; S 16 (+0/+1), D 18, C 16, I 15, W 14, Ch 13; SZ M; ML 13; XP 6,000; *PMC*/94; *plate mail of electricity +3* (can discharge one "jolt" per day; 6d6 hp damage to attacker), *ring of protection +1, long sword +2* (specialized), *short sword +1.*

Spell-like abilities (usable once/round at will): *charm person, darkness 15' radius, dimension door* (once/day), *ESP, infravision* (innate), *shapechange* (humanoid form only), *suggestion, teleport without error.*

Resting against the walls of this chamber are seven unlocked iron trunks containing weapons and armor. Bzallin intends to hire mercenaries to fight alongside the tanar'ri in the Blood War, and this equipment (crafted by slaves in the Abyss) will be used to secure their loyalty. The trunks contain the following:

Trunk #1 holds six suits of *plate mail +1* and a suit of *plate mail +2* (designed for a female elf). Trunk #2 contains six *shields +1* and six *helmets of protection +1.* Trunk #3 contains 14 *long swords +1*, five *long swords +2*, 13 *short swords +1* and ten *short swords +2.* Trunk #4 holds a battle axe, three morning stars, a *morning star +1*, and a *footman's mace +2.* Trunk #5 contains 11 broad swords, five *broad swords +1*, a *bastard sword +1*, and 15 *daggers +1.* Trunk #6 holds 15 *spears +1*, 24 daggers, and nine *daggers +2.* Trunk #7 contains six suits of *splint mail +1* and a suit of *studded leather armor +2.*

10. Jailer's Den. Next to the door leading to area **11** is a locked iron chest containing 11 pairs of steel shackles. These *shackles of magic negation* prevent spellcasting and suppress innate magic abilities. Once locked, they can be removed only by a *knock, dispel magic,* or *limited wish* spell. Against other magical attacks, they have 50% magic resistance. Against physical attacks, they are treated as AC 0 with 75 hp and are damaged only by magical weapons. PCs can use the *shackles* to prevent captured NPCs from employing spells and spell-like abilities. The chest is warded by a *Leomund's trap* spell, and Ezan (see below) carries the only key.

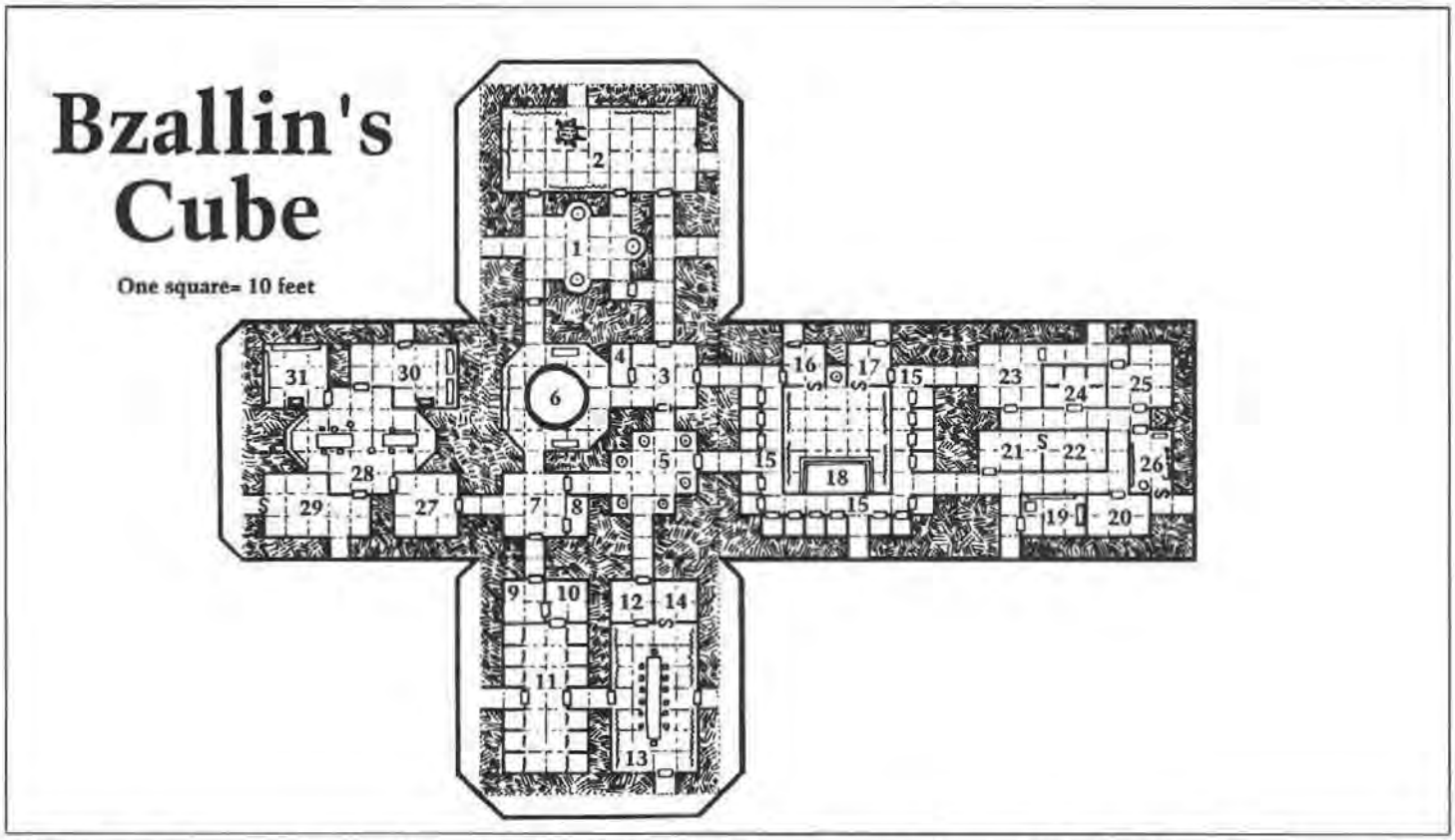
Other furnishings in the room include a black marble table displaying an ornate chessboard (450 gp, plus 32 steel chessmen worth 10 gp apiece), two padded chairs, and a bold tapestry depicting the Quasi-elemental plane of Lightning (worth 7,500 gp).

Guarding this chamber is Ezan, a drow fighter/mage who recently joined Bzallin's school of wizardry. As a newcomer, he is assigned the most boring tasks. No one has ever escaped from Bzallin's prison, and Ezan feels his talents are being wasted serving guard duty. At the moment, Ezan is playing chess with one of Bzallin's invisible stalkers (and winning). Being drow, he keeps the light in the chamber relatively dim. In melee combat, Ezan wields his magical long sword. For ranged attacks, he prefers his *ring of icebolts* or a well-placed *lightning bolt.*

Ezan (6th level/5th level drow fighter/mage): AL CE; AC –1; MV 12; F6/W5; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon or spell; SA spells; SD only surprised on a 1 on d10; *infravision* 120'; +2 to saves vs. magical attacks; MR 62%; S 15, D 17, I 17; ML 12; XP 5,000; *elven chain mail +2, ring of protection +1, long sword +1, ring of icebolts* (15 charges; 2d6 hp damage; save vs. wands indicates half damage), key to iron chest (see above). Drow spell-like abilities: *dancing lights, faerie fire, darkness, detect magic* (once/day), *know alignment* (once/day), *levitate* (once/day).

Spells memorized: *magic missile* (×3), *shocking grasp; alter self, invisibility; lightning bolt.* Ezan keeps his spellbook in area **15.**

Invisible stalker: INT high; AL N; AC 3; MV 12, fly 12 (A); HD 8; hp 55; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 4d4; SA surprise (–6 penalty to opponents' surprise rolls if undetected); SD invisibility; MR 30%; SZ L (8' tall); ML 14; XP 3,000;



MM/208. The stalker attacks intruders on sight.

11. Prison Cells.

> Three doors lead from this long corridor. Spaced along the walls are twelve square cubicles, two of which are occupied. One of the occupants — a two-headed, six-armed monstrosity — throws itself against an invisible barrier in a vain attempt to free itself.

This corridor contains 12 prison cells, each one sealed by a permanent *wall of force* cast by Bzallin. (The walls also render each cell completely soundproof.) The lich may pass through the barriers with impunity. *Dispel magic* has no effect on a *wall of force,* but a *wand of cancellation* or a *disintegrate* spell destroys it. To place a prisoner inside a cell, Bzallin temporarily removes the *wall* and reactivates it once the prisoner is safely inside. The barrier does not bar the use of *teleport* and *dimension door* spells; however, all spellcasting prisoners are fitted with *shackles of magic negation* (see area **10**).

Two of the cells are occupied. The remaining 10 cells (determined by DM) are empty. PCs captured by Bzallin's forces may be placed in these cells.

Narikel (9th-level human mage): AL NE; AC 9; MV 12; W9; hp 25; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon; S 11, D 15, C 9, I 17, W 10, Ch 9; ML 7; XP 3,000; *shackles of magic negation.* Spells remaining: *magic missile, unseen servant; ESP, knock; fireball, slow; confusion.*

Narikel was one of Bzallin's apprentices until she was caught trying to steal the lich's *staff of the sphere* (see area **30**). Narikel is deceitful and self-serving, willing to feign anything to get the PCs to free her. She may assist the PCs in fighting Bzallin provided she gets her fair share of magical items! Even then, she eventually betrays the PCs to redeem herself in the eyes of the lich.

Six-armed two-headed giant troll: AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 10; hp 73; THAC0 9; #AT 6 claws/2 bites; Dmg 1d4+4 (×6)/1d8+4 (×2); SA attack three opponents at once; SD regenerates 3 hp/round; SZ L (10' tall); ML 16; XP 3,000; *MM*/349 (troll, variant).

If set free, this berserk magical creation attacks the PCs on sight. In its frenzied state, it attacks at +2 and saves against *hold monster* and *charm monster* spells at +4.

12. The Living Floor. Ivory-colored tiles cover the floor of this 20' square chamber. This is deceiving, because the "floor" is actually the belly of a trapper held in *temporal stasis.* The trapper is released via a *contingency* spell, triggered whenever a lawfully-aligned individual attempts to cross the room. The trapper quickly wraps its folds around the lawful individual (and anyone else who happens to be standing close by) and squeezes its prey until killed or reduced to 1 hp. It continues to envelop its victim(s) for 1d8 hours after suffocation, allowing for digestion. There are no protuberances to help identify the trapper as such. This makes the creature exceedingly difficult to detect (5% chance) without the aid of divination spells or psionics.

Trapper: INT high; AL N; AC 3; MV 3; HD 12; hp 83; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 4 hp + victim's AC; SA suffocates victim in 6 rounds (regardless of the amount of damage suffered); SD immune to heat- and cold-based attacks; SZ H (20' × 20'); ML 11; XP 3,000; *MM*/229 (lurker).

13. Dining Hall.

> An iron chandelier fitted with glowing candles hangs above a monstrous table of stained red wood, around which fourteen comfortable chairs have been arranged. Ornate silverware graces the tabletop, and at the far end sits a fat, bearded figure dressed in crimson robes. He is tearing apart the leg of some large, cooked beast. Waiting on him are three servants dressed in neat, black uniforms. The walls are adorned with huge tapestries depicting the four elemental planes.

The hungry "mage" is none other than Vzarro. The PCs will recognize this disguise from their last encounter with the sinister nycaloth (see "Amazzar's Workroom" for statistics). Vzarro is busily devouring a cooked stench kow (prepared by the annis in area **19**) and drinking mugfuls of baatezu blood (area **19**). The three uniformed servants standing near him are actually mezzoloths using *alter self* spells to hide their true appearance. These are not the same mezzoloths encountered in "Part One."

Vzarro is bound to service, but his loyalty is questionable. He wants the characters to destroy Bzallin, for only the lich's destruction ensures his freedom. To allay Bzallin's suspicions, however, Vzarro plans to kill one of the PCs but let the rest "escape." He lures the PCs into the chamber and invites them to join in the feast. If the PCs start asking questions, Vzarro keeps his answers as nebulous and vague as possible. He does not divulge Bzallin's location in the event the lich is watching via his *crystal ball*. However, once he has chosen the PC he wishes to slay and present to Bzallin as a trophy, he telepathically orders his mezzoloth henchman to attack that one individual, cutting off the character's escape if possible. Given a chance, Mezzoloth #2 tries to catch the PC in its *net of entrapment* while Mezzoloth #1 jabs the poor character through the net with its *javelin of lightning*. Vzarro is not afraid to engage in melee combat but *teleports* to a safer location if seriously opposed.

Spying on this chamber from area **14** are two bodaks drafted into service by the nycaloth. The bodaks are not eager to fight the party and remain in area **14** until called forth by Vzarro.

Mezzoloths (3): hp 91, 73, 72; see "Amazzar's Workroom" for complete statistics. Mezzoloth #1 is armed with a fully-charged *javelin of lightning*. Mezzoloth #2 carries a *net of entrapment* and a *long sword +1*. Mezzoloth #3 employs a *rod of flailing* with 30 charges (strikes twice per round as a +3 weapon; affords +4 bonus to AC and saving throws for one turn).

The silverware on the dining table is worth 50,000 gp for the entire set, but there are nearly 100 separate pieces. The chandelier suspended above the table has 54 glass candles with *continual light* spells cast upon them. The four huge tapestries are worth 10,000 gp each but weigh 50+ lbs. The secret door leading to area **14** is difficult to notice (dwarves and elves have a 1-in-6 chance, other races a 1-in-8 chance). A small peep-hole is carved into the door.

14. Secret Storeroom. The floor of this 20' × 20' room is covered with a mottled carpet. Two ebony cabinets filled with silver dishware (value determined by DM) stand against one wall, while in one corner sits a large keg of sweet wine (2,500 gp).

Peering through the peep-hole in the secret door is a bodak. A second bodak lurks within this unlit chamber, waiting to catch intruders with its dreaded death gaze. Any PC who tries to look through the peep-hole into the secret room has a 10% chance of gazing straight into the eye of a bodak, slaying the character instantly if a save vs. petrification fails. By a similar token, any PC who jabs something slender through the peep-hole (like a rod) has a 10% chance of blinding the spying bodak in one eye (Dmg 1d4) and reducing the effectiveness of its gaze attack (all saves at +2).

The bodaks serve Bzallin and Vzarro out of fear. Both the lich and the yugoloth are unaffected by the bodaks' fearsome death gaze. These hapless creatures are the remnants of adventurers slain on J'zzalshrak's layer of the Abyss. They have no treasure.

Bodaks (2): INT low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 6; HD 9+9; hp 60, 51; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (1d6+1 with spear +1); SA death gaze (one target only); SD +1 weapons to hit; immune to poison; *infravision* 180'; MR immune to *charm, hold, sleep* and *slow* spells; SZ M; ML 11; XP 5,000; *PMC*/36; *spear +1*.

15. Apprentices' Chambers. Enclosing the lecture hall (area **18**) on three sides are fifteen 10' × 10' rooms reserved for Bzallin's apprentices. Each chamber is furnished with basic comforts: a padded four-poster bed, a plush armchair, a desk, a small bookcase, and a cloak rack. The *continual light* spells that illuminate these areas may be turned on and off by uttering a simple command word.

The DM may allocate the rooms randomly, provided one is set aside for each of Bzallin's 12 apprentices: Ajadarus (area **18**), Cazmus (area **28**), Dragen (area **30**), Evelyn (area **30**), Ezan (area **10**), Kysh (see below), Malloch (area **30**), Narikel (imprisoned in area **11**), Pentriss (area **25**), Raxalla (area **29**), Talica (area **30**), and Tzard (see below). Two of the rooms are empty.

To determine what magical possessions are stored in each room, roll 1d12 and consult the table below. In addition to any items listed below, Talica and Ezan both keep their spellbooks in their rooms. Talica's book contains all the spells she has memorized plus 1d8 1st-level, 1d6 2nd-level, 1d6 3rd-level and 1d4 4th-level spells. Ezan's book contains his memorized spells plus 1d4 1st-level, 1d4 2nd-level and 1d4 3rd-level spells.

Regardless of the room, all apprentices keep their personal items (both magical and mundane) in a *fire trapped* (75%) or *ice trapped* (25%) iron box. Anyone other than the owner who opens the box sustains 1d4+12 hp fire or cold damage (save for half).

Roll to determine which magical items are found in the iron box:

Roll 1d12

1–2 A magical potion in a sealed crystal vial (roll 1d4): 1) *healing*, 2) *anti-sleep*, 3) *blue dragon breath*, 4) *magic resistance*.

3–4 A scroll in a crystal tube (protected by a *sepia snake sigil*, roll 1d4): 1) *protection* (DM's choice), 2) random 3rd-level spell, 3) random 4th-level spell, 4) random 5th-level spell.

5–6 A piece of jewelry (roll 1d4): 1) *earring of alignment detection* 2) *badge of monster control*, 3) *brooch of be going*, 4) *necklace of adaptation*.

7–8: A bag containing 1d4 candles of the following type (roll 1d4): 1) *darkness*, 2) *protection*, 3) *exploding*, 4) *evocation*.

9–10 One of the following unique magic items: 1) *Murlynd's spoon*, 2) *quill pen of copying*, 3) *box of magical matches*, 4) *planar fork* (see the *ENCYCLOPEDIA MAGICA* tome pages 491–492 for possible types).
11 No magical item. Do not roll again.
12 Roll twice on the table using a d10.

Two of the rooms (determined randomly by the DM) are occupied. Kysh and Tzard are either resting (60%) or studying their spellbooks (40%). They have *alarm* spells cast on their doors which activate if either is opened.

Kysh (6th-level/4th-level dual-classed human thief/mage): AL CE; AC 2 (*armor* spell and Dexterity); MV 12; T6/W4; hp 32; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon; D 18, C 15, I 16; ML 11; XP 2,000; thief abilities: PP 60%, OL 55%, FRT 40%, MS 60%, HS 50%, DN 25%, CW 90%, RL 30%; spellbook, *dagger +1*, *potions of gaseous form* and protection from non-magical edged weapons.

Spells memorized: *alarm* (already cast), *magic missile, shocking grasp; invisibility, ray of enfeeblement.* Her spellbook is not trapped and contains an additional 1d8 1st-level and 1d8 2nd-level spells.

Bzallin took a chance admitting Kysh into his dark school. As a struggling rogue who decided to give up her thieving ways to learn the black arts, Kysh does not want to jeopardize her growth as a mage by relying too heavily on her thieving skills. However, she falls back into her old habits if her spell power and potions prove ineffective.

Tzard (8th-level drow mage): AL CE; AC 3 (armor spell and Dexterity; *stoneskin* spell absorbs first six attacks); MV 12; W8; hp 32; THAC0 18; #AT 1 (2 with haste spell); Dmg by weapon or spell; SA spells; SD only surprised on a 1 on d10; *infravision* 120'; +2 to saves vs. magical attacks; MR 66%; D 17, C 16, I 18, W 15; ML 13; XP 7,000; *dagger +2, cloak of the umber hulk* (variation of a *gargoyle cloak* which polymorphs wearer into umber hulk; see below), spellbook. Drow spell-like abilities: *dancing lights, faerie fire, darkness, detect magic* (once/day), *know alignment* (once/day), *levitate* (once/day).

Tzard (umber hulk form): AC –1; MV 6; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 3d4/3d4/1d10; SZ L (8' tall, 5' wide); other statistics same as above. Tzard may use the *cloak of the umber hulk* 3/day for 1 turn at a time. If Tzard suffers 20 hp damage or more from edged weapons, acid or magical fire, the *cloak* is destroyed.

Spells memorized: *alarm, burning hands, magic missile, spider climb; blur, knock, Melf's acid arrow; clairvoyance, haste, lightning bolt; enervation, Otiluke's resilient sphere.* Tzard's spellbook is protected by a *contagion* spell and contains an additional 1d8 1st-level, 1d8 2nd-level, 1d6 3rd-level and 1d6 4th-level spells. The book is written using a magical ink that glows faintly when seen through drow eyes. To non-drow, the ink is invisible (although a *true seeing* or *detect invisibility* spell may be used to reveal the script).

This white-maned dark elf is Ezan's older brother (see area **10**), but unlike his younger sibling, Tzard is exclusively a wizard by trade. Tzard is brooding and reclusive and prefers the dark interior of his room over the brightly lit chambers of Bzallin's Cube. When confronted by the PCs, Tzard casts a *blur* spell upon himself (time permitting) and either transforms himself into an umber hulk or attacks with his offensive spells.

16–17. Seminar Rooms. The floors of these soundproof chambers are adorned with tiled murals depicting rings of red, orange, and yellow fire around a central black disk. Hovering 4' above the floor is a 5'-diameter circular crystal slab which serves as a floating tabletop. The transparent slab is smooth, polished, and held aloft by a permanent *levitate* spell. Each slab can support 250 lbs. before sinking to the floor. These chambers are used by Bzallin's apprentices as seminar rooms and for out-of-class meetings.

The secret doors leading to area **18** may be detected normally. An *avoidance* spell cast by Bzallin on each door prevents non-wizards from approaching, let alone opening, the secret doors.

18. Lecture Hall.

Four rows of desks are arranged in center of this spacious chamber. The desks face a stone dais with three steps. Mounted on the wall behind a heavy wooden lectern is a rectangular board of black slate covered with chalk marks, symbols, equations, and runes. The walls of this lecture hall are adorned with four large tapestries depicting scenes of magical destruction. The floor tiles, painted in varying shades of green and black, are arranged in a kaleidoscopic pattern. Lurking in a niche at the back of this lecture hall is a fearsome, beetle-like monster with black pincers, black antennae, and a gleaming black carapace.

Bzallin occasionally gives lectures to his apprentices on planar spellcraft and various potent spells. Bzallin's boardwork includes complete casting notes for the 7th-level spell *simulacrum*. Mages below 13th-level cannot decipher the scrawls, while those 13th-level or higher have normal chances of learning the spell from the information given. Ajadarus, an over-eager 5th-level wizard, is seated behind one of the front-row desks with his spellbook, copying a *fireball* spell from a scroll given to him by Bzallin. He is too distracted to notice PCs who quietly slip in through one of the secret doors.

If attacked, Ajadarus defends himself with his *ring of spell storing* given to him by the lich, first by casting his *prismatic spray* spell and then following up with *hold person* and *magic missile* (all cast at 19th-level). If swarmed by multiple foes, Ajadarus grabs his spellbook and uses the *ring's* teleport ability to escape to area **30**.

Ajadarus (5th-level human mage): AL CE; AC 5; MV 12; W5; hp 16; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; D 15, I 16, W 15; ML 7; XP 1,400; *robe of protection AC 6, dagger +1, ring of spell storing (magic missile, shield, hold person, ice storm, teleport, project image, prismatic spray* all cast at 19th-level), wizard's key (worn around neck; grants +10% chance of learning new spells).

Spells memorized: *burning hands, magic missile, read magic* (already cast), *shocking grasp; blindness, knock; lightning bolt.* Ajadarus' spellbook contains an additional 1d6 1st-level, 1d6 2nd-level, and 1d4 3rd-level spells. The book is not trapped.

Bzallin's lectern is actually a *killer mimic* held in temporal stasis. The spell terminates whenever someone other than Bzallin touches it or inspects it for compartments and hollow cavities. Once it secures its prey, the mimic does not let go until slain or charmed.

Killer mimic: INT semi-; AL NE; AC 7; MV 3; HD 10; hp 50; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3d4; SA glue; SD camouflage (–3 penalty to opponents' surprise rolls); immune to acid attacks; SZ L; ML 13; XP 3,000; *MM*/250 (mimic).

The 8' tall "beetle-like monster" lurking in the alcove is a ceramic rendering of the tanar'ri lord J'zzalshrak. A single blow causing 10 hp damage or more is required to shatter one of its limbs. Six such blows are enough to destroy the entire statue. The statue, though horribly realistic, is neither magical nor dangerous.

19. Kitchen. This kitchen is within easy reach of the dining room (area **13**), and its acoutrements include a small work table cluttered with pots, a wall shelf stacked with foodstuffs, and a large fireplace next to which are three kegs of baatezu blood which tanar'ri drink like wine (non-planar creatures who imbibe the vile liquid must save vs. poison at –5 or sustain 4d6 hp damage and lose 1d4 points of Constitution permanently; successful save indicates 3d6 hp damage and no Constitution loss). Hanging in the hearth are two large copper cauldrons filled with a surprisingly tasty broth.

Occupying the kitchen are two annis pressed into service by the lich Bzallin. They are surprised only on a 1 on 1d10. If intruders are detected, the hags attack with their teeth and talons.

The annis keep several potions in a locked *strongbox of immobility* located on the floor under the table. The box is magically anchored to its current position and cannot be budged by any force. Maelgor carries the key for the box. Inside are six unlabeled potions: *extra-healing* (×2), *metal immunity, invisibility,* non-magical poison (Type E, save at –2; save at –5 if taken deliberately) and *clairvoyance.*

Maelgor and Jzulla (annis): INT very; AL CE; AC 0; MV 15; HD 7+7; hp 55, 49; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1d8+8/1d8+8/1d6+3; SA grapple; SD rarely surprised; cast *fog cloud* 3/day, *change self* at will; edged weapons cause –1 hp damage (blunt weapons inflict 1 hp extra damage per attack); MR 20%; SZ L (8' tall); ML 15; XP 4,000; *MM*/181 (hag). Maelgor wears a *ring of fire resistance,* while Jzulla wears a *ring of seeing* (which functions as the *true seeing* spell) and carries the key to the magical strongbox.

20. Portal Chamber.

This room is filled with swirling gray dust. A bright golden light emanates from a circular portal which has formed in the middle of the far wall. Heaped in the corners are mounds of loose earth, and perched atop these piles are several winged humanoids.

This chamber acts as a gateway between the Cube and the various elemental, para-elemental, and quasi-elemental planes. Lately, however, the portal has been malfunctioning and attracting curious mephits to Bzallin's lair. The mephits stop by to chat and bicker with one another, waiting for the portal to open a *gate* back to their own plane. The portal's destination changes randomly every nine rounds. For the moment, the portal is open to the plane of Radiance (hence the bright light). If the PCs remain for more than two rounds, 1d4 radiant mephits suddenly fly through the portal and begin pestering the other mephits. The portal's destination changes the following round, opening into the plane of Ash, Smoke, Fire, Ice, Ooze, Salt, or some other element (DM's choice). There's a 5% non-cumulative chance that the portal opens into the Quasi-elemental Plane of Vacuum. Anyone inside the room at that time is immediately sucked into the Void and lost. PCs who make successful surprise rolls can try to secure themselves, assuming they find something to hold on to!

Occupying the chamber are 1d4 mephits of the following types:

Earth mephits: INT average; AL N; AC 5; MV 12, fly 24 (C); HD 3+2; hp 17; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4; SA spits rocks (1d6 hp damage), enlarge self (damage increased to 2d6/2d6); SZ M; ML 10; XP 420; *PMC*/72. Heavy-set earth mephits are sullen and humorless. *Passwall* and *transmute rock to mud* spells destroy them instantly.

Radiant mephits: AC 4; MV 12, fly 24 (B); HD 3; hp 15; Dmg 1d3/1d3; SA color spray; SD immune to "visual" spells; *infravision* 120'; regenerate 1 hp/turn in strong light; ML 7; *PMC*/73; other statistics same as earth mephit. These embrous mephits are flighty and easily distracted.

Dust mephits: AC 6; MV 12, fly 24 (B); HD 3; hp 12; Dmg 1d2/1d2; SA breath weapon (cloud of irritating dust); SD regenerate 1 hp/turn in dusty,

waterless areas; half damage from cutting/impaling weapons; immune to heat and fire; ML 9; *PMC*/75; other statistics same as earth mephits. Dust mephits are gaunt, ghoulish creatures with a fatalistic attitude. They always take maximum damage from water-based and wind-based attacks.

Gate spells are confounded by the presence of the elemental portal. The mephits can still *gate* other mephits with a 30% chance of success, but the type of mephit is limited to whichever elemental plane is connected via the portal.

21. Annis' Bedchamber. This chamber has been set aside for Maelgor and Jzulla, Bzallin's annis cooks (see area **19** for statistics). Two oversized obsidian beds rest against one wall. The beds are without blankets or mattresses, as the annis disdain human comforts. Positioned between the beds is a stone table with an intricate bronze hydra statuette (700 gp; weight 15 lbs.) placed atop it. A secret door leads to Bzallin's treasury. See area **22** below for details.

22. Bzallin's Secret Treasury. The secret door leading to this chamber has a permanent *non-detection* spell cast upon it. Hence, a *wand of secret door and trap location* does not reveal the door so long as Bzallin's spell remains in place. Dwarves and svirfneblin have a 1-in-6 chance of noticing the secret door, while other races have a 1-in-8 chance of spotting it.

> This chamber is illuminated by a hemisphere of scintillating, multi-colored light positioned in the middle of the floor. The room is otherwise empty.

Bzallin has placed a permanent *prismatic sphere* (10' diameter, 5' high) in this chamber to guard some of his more valuable and dangerous possessions (particularly items he wishes to keep out of the hands of his apprentices). Most of the items have been placed inside a 4' × 2' × 2' black crystal chest (valued at 16,000 gp). The only item which doesn't fit in the chest is a 4' tall, solid steel hydra statue with four heads (weight 350 lbs). The *prismatic sphere* must be negated before the treasures can be obtained. (See *PHB*, page 196, for details.) When the lid of the chest is opened, the hydra statue reveals itself to be a living steel. The living steel morphs into humanoid form and attacks with two sword-like arms.

Living steel: INT average; AL N; AC –2; MV 12; HD 10; hp 64; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 1d10/1d10; SA alter shape; SD +2 or better weapons to hit; immune to electrical and fire-based attacks which cause 55 hp damage or less; slowed by cold-based attacks (living steel takes double damage for two rounds afterward); MR 20%; SZ M; ML 19; XP 5,000; *MCA*.

The living steel requires one round to transform itself into a new form. During this round, the living steel cannot attack, has AC 5, and may be hit by normal weapons. The living steel relentlessly pursues its quarry anywhere inside the Cube and may alter its shape to squeeze through cracks in doorways (again, requiring one full round to do so).

Bzallin's treasure comprises the following: a *cubic gate* (resting on a small jade table worth 5,000 gp), a platinum tripod (4,300 gp) atop which rests an *iron flask* (containing a death slaad) which has been *crystalbrittled* to conceal its sinister nature, a *wand of cancellation* (39 charges) held in a silver beholder's mouthpick (2,000 gp), a magical replica of the *dread wand of Orcus* (15 charges; see below), and a *libram of silver magic* (which Bzallin cannot use but keeps as a souvenir) encased in a *wizard locked* iron case. Bzallin has imbued the replica *wand of Orcus* with the following powers: *animate dead* (1 charge; each charge animates 3d6 corpses), *control undead* (2 charges per use; as the spell), and *death spell* (3 charges per use). Using this *wand* should be considered an evil act, even if wielded against creatures or individuals of evil alignment. The *wand* cannot be recharged; if placed in Bzallin's recharger (see area **26**), both the *wand* and the recharger explode for 12d8 hp damage (30' radius).

Death slaad (trapped in *iron flask*): INT genius; AL CN; AC –4; MV 12; HD 15+7; hp 93; THAC0 5; #AT 3 or 2; Dmg 3d6/3d6/2d10 or by weapon +3 (×2); SA claw attack stuns victim for 1d6 rounds (successful Constitution check negates stun); spell-like abilities; SD +2 weapons to hit; limited *shapechange;* MR 70%; SZ M (6' tall); ML 18; XP 22,000; *PMC*/90 (slaad).

Spell-like abilities (usable one at a time, once/round, at will): *advanced illusion, astral spell* (does not function in Bzallin's Cube), *cloudkill, darkness 15' radius, detect magic, detect invisibility, ESP, fear, fireball* (once/day), *flame strike, gate* (1d6 blue slaadi; 100% chance of success), *invisibility, locate object, phantasmal killer* (once/day), *symbol* (once/day), *unholy word* (once/day), and *wind walk* (does not function in Bzallin's Cube).

The death slaad fears Bzallin but enjoys inflicting pain on others. It does not attack immediately, preferring to remain invisible and use *ESP* to learn more about those responsible for releasing it. When it decides to reveal itself, the slaad uses its *shapechange* ability to assume the form of a human female named Iliara. "Iliara" claims to be a powerful rival who was trapped by Bzallin many years ago. If "unmasked," the slaad's first task is to summon 1d6 blue slaadi using its *gate* ability. Given the chance, it uses Bzallin's *cubic gate* to return to Limbo before its escape is detected or its life is threatened. The *cubic gate* functions normally inside Bzallin's lair and allows safe transport to the Prime Material plane, Limbo, the Abyss, Baator, Elysium, and the Elemental Plane of Water.

Blue slaadi (1d6): INT low; AL CN; AC 2; MV 6; HD 8+4; hp 52 each; THAC0 13; #AT 5; Dmg 2d6/2d6/2d6/2d6/2d8; SA multiple claw attacks; SD +1 weapons needed to hit; SZ L (10' tall); ML 12 (or as character); XP 9,000; *MM*/318 and *PMC*/88 (corrected version). Spell-like abilities: *gate* (twice/day; 1d2 blue slaadi with 40% chance of success), *hold person* (one target only), *passwall, telekinesis.*

23. Xorn Statue.

> The floor of this chamber is covered with spiralling black and gold tiles. In the middle of the floor is a 5'-tall statue of a gray, bulbous monster with three eyes, three stumpy legs, and a large mouth on top of its "head." Each of the statue's three stony appendages points towards one of the chamber's exits. Painted on the chamber doors are snarling blue dragon visages.

The statue depicts a xorn. Unlike the other "statues" in Bzallin's lair, this is not the petrified remains of a monster, but rather an actual stone carving. Hidden in the xorn statue's gaping maw is a small iron lever which, when pulled, deactivates the trap in this room for three rounds. Thieves who make a successful find/remove traps rolls can detect the hidden lever under the xorn's stony tongue.

The two doors which lead from this room are booby-trapped (from the inside only). Anyone approaching within 5' of a closed door is struck by an intense electrical discharge (11d4 hp damage; save vs. rod for half damage). Holding or wedging the door open keeps the lightning from discharging. All of the Cube's residents are aware of these traps and how to deactivate them.

24. Privies. These three curtained cubicles are cleaned regularly by unseen servants. Each cubicle contains a chair with a hole carved into its seat and a waste pan tucked underneath. Towels hanging from hooks on the walls are cleaned regularly using *cantrip* spells.

25. Koroxon's Quarters.

Placed around the perimeter of this room are dozens of burning braziers and smoldering censers. Huddled in the middle of the smoke-filled chamber are four wretched humanoids with deformed features and rubbery hides. They are fighting over a small silvery object which catches the light.

Standing in front of a large wall mirror is a beautiful woman wearing wizard's robes and plenty of gold jewelry. The woman is speaking to a bloated fiend whose hideous features are captured in the reflective surface of the mirror. Annoyed by the constant bickering of the creatures behind her, she turns sharply on one heel and tells the wretches to "Be SILENT!!!" Then she turns back to the mirror to carry on her polite conversation.

The four deformed humanoids are dretches that Koroxon periodically devours. The dretches are currently ogling over a silver *everful mug*, filling it to the brim with rancid ichor and drinking themselves into a stupor. Once the PCs are detected, the dretches use their *telekinesis* ability to hurl hot braziers at the party (Dmg 2d4) or they *gate* reinforcements. If the babau has not been defeated elsewhere, he is lurking in the shadows, relying on his thieving skills to remain unseen.

The woman in front of the mirror is Pentriss, one of Bzallin's apprentices. Horribly scarred by acid, Pentriss uses *alter self* spells to conceal her ruined face. She is borrowing Koroxon's ebony-framed *mirror of communication* to speak with a shator gehreleth named Ghasparog (who lives in the Abyss). Bzallin has given Pentriss the onerous task of convincing Ghasparog to join J'zzalshrak against the baatezu, thus amalgamating their respective legions. If the conversation is allowed to continue, Ghasparog becomes abrasive and demands too many concessions, forcing Pentriss to "hang up" on him. (If the PCs somehow manage to insult the gehreleth, Ghasparog goes out of his way to seek retribution.) The *mirror* enables its user to open a line of communication anywhere in the known planes, provided one knows the command word ("Drizzinvel"). A *shatter* spell, *directed shout* spell, or any single blow inflicting 10 hp damage destroys the mirror.

Pentriss (9th-level human mage): AL CE; AC 2 (pre-cast *stoneskin* protects against first 6 attacks); MV 12; W9; hp 30 (36 with *ioun stone);* THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon; SD see clearly in magical darkness; immune to magical weapons (granted by potion); MR 10% (granted by *ioun stones);* D 17, I 18, W 15; ML 12; XP 7,000; *doom dagger +2* (drains one energy level on natural roll of 20, no save), *ring of Eelix* (creates a shimmering blue sheath around wearer, equivalent to AC 5), onyx *ring of negative plane protection,* four invisible *ioun stones* (two clear spheres that grant 5% magic resistance each; deep black sphere allows user to see through magical darkness; brass lozenge temporarily increases hit points by 2d4+2), *potion of magic blocking* (grants immunity to magical weapons for 1d4+4 turns), scroll *(anti-magic shell* cast at 12th-level), spellbook, golden belt (500 gp), gold necklace set with six fire opals (18,000 gp), four gold bracelets set with semi-precious stones (1d10 × 500 gp each).

Spells memorized: *detect magic, magic missile* (×2), *read magic, shield; alter self* (already cast), *knock, Melf's acid arrow; hold person, lightning bolt, wraithform; polymorph self, shout; wall of force*. Pentriss's spellbook is kept near her at all times, and it is protected by a *fire trap* spell (Dmg 1d4+9).

Koroxon (babau): INT genius; AL CE; AC –3; MV 15; HD 8+14; hp 65; THAC0 13; #AT 1 or 3; Dmg 1d4+4/1d4+1/2d4 or by weapon (+7 strength bonus); SA corrosion, backstab, enfeebling gaze; SD +1 weapons to hit; thief abilities (at 9th-level); *infravision;* tanar'ri immunities; MR 50%; SZ M (7' tall); ML 17; XP 17,000; *PMC*/95 (tanar'ri, greater); *halberd +2.* Spell-like abilities: *darkness 15' radius, dispel magic, fear, fly, gate* (1d6 cambions; see area **3** for statistics; 40% chance of success), *heat metal, infravision, levitate, polymorph self, teleport without error.*

When roaming Bzallin's Cube, the babau uses his *polymorph self* ability to take the form of an intimidating, battle-scarred human warrior dressed in spiked, blood-stained plate mail.

Dretches (4): INT low; AL CE; AC 4; MV 9; HD 2; hp 15, 13, 11, 10; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d4+1; SA spells; SD tanar'ri immunities; MR 10%; SZ S; ML 12 (20 if Koroxon is present); XP 1,400; *PMC*/100 (tanar'ri, least). Spell-like abilities: *darkness 15' radius, gate* (1d4 dretches; 50% chance of success), *infravision, scare, stinking cloud, telekinesis, teleport without error.*

26. Laboratory.

This chamber seems to be a laboratory. Pushed against one wall is a desk covered with sheets of parchment and alchemical equipment. On the wall behind the desk is a shelf lined with beakers, vials, and jars. Next to the door is a cluttered worktable, while between the table and the desk sit two iron chests, their lids marked with a strange black rune. By far the most unusual furnishing is a four-foot tall, upright bronze cylinder positioned near the wall shelf. The cylinder is bolted to the floor, and a hinged door is built into one side.

This room is occupied by Pentriss's homonculous, Eeguz. (If Pentriss is killed, Eeguz dies and reverts to a pool of ichor.) The homonculous is trapped in the room when Bzallin activates his *guards and wards* spell and waits for Pentriss to return from area **25.** The homonculous either hides inside the upright bronze cylinder to avoid detection, or it takes a sip from a *potion of invisibility* and perches atop the cylinder. Pentriss can see through the creature's eyes, using it as her spy.

Eeguz (homonculous): INT genius ; AL CE; AC 6; MV 6, fly 18 (B); HD 2; hp 9; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3; SA bite causes sleep; SD saves as W9; SZ T; ML 13; XP 270; *MM*/192. If Eeguz is slain, Pentriss suffers an immediate 2d10 hp damage.

The upright cylinder is a magical recharger which Bzallin built while living in Horizon. The cylinder activates

whenever a charged magic item is placed within; such items regain charges at a rate of one/turn. However, using the cylinder permanently lowers the maximum number of charges an item can hold by 1d10. Thus, there are only so many times the recharger can be used before the charged item loses its magic permanently. The cylinder cannot be used to recharge items that have been completely drained. The recharger weighs 200 lbs. and is securely fastened to the floor.

The pages atop the desk provide recipes for 1d10 randomly-determined potions. (The DM may select potions from the *DMG* or *ENCYCLOPEDIA MAGICA*. Characters inspecting the alchemical equipment atop the desk discover an unplugged *potion of invisibility* among several botched potions and a number of other vile concoctions. There are no other magical potions hidden on the desk, the table or the shelf, although PCs find countless chemicals, corrosive acids and poisons stored here.

The iron chests are emblazoned with magical symbols cast by Bzallin (see *PHB*, page 193). Any PC who touches the chest or reads the symbol is affected by the spell. The first chest is protected by a *symbol of insanity* and holds four sealed glass cubes. The cubes contain small samples of green slime, gray ooze, olive slime, and crystal ooze respectively. The second chest is protected by a *symbol of death* and is very cold to the touch. It contains six jars of preserved blood (taken from Bzallin's apprentices) which are kept cool by a patch of brown mold. Bzallin keeps these blood samples for his *clone* spell. Any warm-blooded individual opening the chest is subjected to the brown mold's heat-draining attack.

Brown mold (small patch): INT non-; AL N; AC 9; MV 0; HD nil; THAC0 nil; #AT 0; Dmg nil; SA freezing (4d8 hp damage/round); SD absorb heat; SZ S; ML nil; XP 15; *MM*/255 (mold). The mold is only harmed by *disintegrate* spells, plant-affecting magic, and directed cold-based attacks like *cone of cold*.

27. Planar Study.

Two smoking censers are mounted atop tripods in opposite corners of this chamber. Hovering in the middle of the room and turning clockwise on an invisible axis is a translucent rendering of the city of Horizon complete with the *sphere of annihilation*.

Symbols and wizardly runes are used to mark various buildings and districts as they appear before you. Clearly, this is some sort of magically-generated diagram.

The three-dimensional holographic image seen floating about the room was created by Bzallin and is just one of several hundred illusionary images which can be summoned. Bzallin has programmed this chamber to display images of specific layers of the Abyss, Baator, and other known planes. One can also conjure up-to-date images of various planar cities and any number of cities on the Prime Material plane including Horizon (complete with Bzallin's blacksphere). Although this is not an actual scrying device, the images are very detailed. To picture a specific place, a person need only stand in the room and mention the place by name. A successful *dispel magic* cast at 19th-level permanently removes whatever image is currently being displayed.

The gold censers hold non-magical incense and are worth 1,500 gp each.

28. Wizards' Workroom.

Two large tables stand in this middle of this brightly-lit chamber. The tables are covered with books, scrolls, jars, and other fragile pieces of laboratory equipment. Colored tiles form an elaborate star-shaped pattern on the floor, while suspended from the ceiling are two crystal orbs which glow like lanterns. Hundreds of jars are stored on a wall-shelf at one end of the room.

Two of Bzallin's apprentices (Cazmus and Evelyn) occupy this chamber. If the PCs have entered the lair undetected, these wizards are studying at the tables. If they are expecting intruders, the wizards prepare for the party's arrival by casting all of their defensive spells *(protection from normal missiles, stoneskin* etc.) and readying their offensive ones. Six juju zombies with heavy crossbows are normally stationed here as guards; usually they stand in the "wings" so as not to get in the way. If the juju zombies were taken to area **1**, Bzallin replaces them with a pair of summoned invisible stalkers. The zombies and stalkers attack intruders on sight, protecting the wizards from harm.

If Bzallin was warned of the party's arrival by one of the flameskulls (see area **4** of "Bzallin's Citadel"), one flameskull is also present in this chamber. It casts and reflects spells until destroyed.

Cazmus (10th-level human mage/tanar'ri hybrid): AL CE; AC 4 *(stoneskin* spell guards against first 6 attacks); MV 12; W10; hp 28; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by spell, weapon or claw (2d4); SD +2 to saves vs. fire, cold, electricity, poison and gas; D 16, I 17; ML 10; XP 8,000; robe, *bracers of defense* AC 6, *dagger +3, staff of striking* (45 charges) capped with a fist-sized amethyst (5,000 gp) clutched in a platinum claw (350 gp), *ring of mind shielding*.

Spells memorized: *chill touch, magic missile, read magic, shield; blur, ESP, knock, mirror image; lightning bolt, protection from normal missiles, wraithform; evervation, stoneskin; feeblemind, teleport*. Cazmus' spellbook contains an additional 1d8 1st-level, 1d8 2nd-level, 1d6 3rd-level, 1d6 4th-level and 1d4 5th-level spells. The book, located atop one of the desks, is protected by a sepia snake sigil.

Cazmus had an unfortunate experience casting a *polymorph self* spell from a scroll. One misspoken word permanently transformed the left side of his body and face into that of a nabassu tanar'ri. Cazmus may still cast spells with his clawed hand and suffers no penalties to movement because of his one wing or misshapen leg. When the PCs enter the room, Cazmus casts a *blur* spell upon himself then unloads his *lightning bolt*. If attacked with missile weapons, he casts his *shield* spell. In melee combat, he fights with his *+3 staff of striking* (using 3 charges with every hit and inflicting 1d6+9 hp damage). If hard pressed, he uses his *wraithform* or *teleport* spell to relocate to area **11.**

Evelyn (6th-level githzerai mage): AL CE; AC 1; MV 12; W6; hp 23; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon or spell; D 17, C 15, I 17, Ch 15; SD plane shift at will; MR 50%; ML 13; XP 4,000; *PMC*/48; *girdle of defense* AC 5 (similar to *bracers of defense), ring of protection +1, ioun stone* (super-charged silver rod; gives +2 to all saves vs. electrical attacks), *amulet of psionic reflection* attached to golden headband (250 gp), silver *mageslayer dagger +1* (+2 vs. wizards), spellbook (item spell cast upon it).

Spells memorized: *burning hands, change self, magic missile, spider climb; hypnotic pattern, pyrotechnics; haste,*

wraithform. Evelyn's spellbook has an *item* spell cast upon it, enabling her to hide it in her girdle pocket. The spellbook (which is not trapped) holds an additional 1d8 1st-level, 1d8 2nd-level and 1d6 3rd-level spells.

Evelyn is a githzerai outcast, shunned by her people because of her evil disposition. She relies on her magic resistance to protect her against PC wizards, assuming *wraithform* only when reduced to half her total hit points. She saves her *haste* spell for either the juju zombies or the invisible stalkers, doubling their movement and number of attacks.

Juju zombies (6): hp 33, 31, 28, 25 (×2), 24; see area **3** of "Bzallin's Citadel" for complete statistics. Each juju zombie employs a heavy crossbow loaded with one bolt of *polymorphing* (+3 to hit). Any creature struck by a bolt suffers normal damage and must save vs. spell or be turned to glass (similar to a *flesh to stone* spell).

Invisible stalkers (2): hp 60, 54; see area **10** for complete statistics.

The crystal orbs secured above the tables have *glassteel* spells cast upon them. Contained within are two evil siblings named Vraekas (male) and Vharkal (female). These fighters were captured during the Blood War and *polymorphed* into will o'wisps by Bzallin. Aside from their improved Armor Class (AC –8) and ability to fly, the fighters have none of the wisps' magical abilities and are virtually harmless in their current forms. If freed from their crystal prisons, the pair quickly become an annoyance, hoping someone will cast a *dispel magic* upon them. A successful *dispel magic* cast against 19th-level restores them to their original forms. Once restored, Vraekas and his sister fight their way to freedom by attacking anyone perceived as a threat.

Vraekas and Vharkal (10th-level human fighters): AL LE; AC 2 (-8 in wisp form); MV 9 (fly 18 (A) in wisp form); F9; hp 82, 70; THAC0 12 (base); #AT 5/2 (0 in wisp form); Dmg by weapon type (modified by Strength and specialization); ML 16; XP 3,000; *MM*/361 (will o'wisp).

Vraekas has 18/54 Strength (+2 to hit, +3 on damage), wears *plate mail +1*, and carries a *two-handed sword +3* (specialized). Vharkal has 17 Strength (+1 to hit, +1 on damage), wears *plate mail +1*, and wields an intelligent *bastard sword +2* named *Crescent* (INT 11; AL CE; Ego 12; cast *death* spell once/day, *detect good 10' radius*, telepathic contact with wielder). She is specialized with the blade and has the two-handed style specialization (+3 bonus to weapon's speed factor).

PCs searching the tabletops find several spell scrolls, all cast at 19th-level: *eyebite, contagion, summon shadow, reincarnation,* and *stone to flesh*. There is also a scroll of *protection from baatezu* in a plugged metal tube. A *fire trap* spell triggers the instant the plug is removed by someone other than Bzallin (inflicting 1d4+19 hp damage). The jars on the wall shelf contain material components for virtually every spell listed in the *PHB* (DM's discretion). All jars are carefully labeled.

29. Summoning Chamber.

> The floor of this chamber is tiled black. However, painted in gold over the tiles is a large thaumaturgic circle used for summonings. The outer "ring" of the magic circle is adorned with strange runes, while a silver symbol adorns the center of the circle. Four tall braziers made of polished silver are placed in the corners around the circle. Tendrils of smoke rise from the braziers and fill the chamber with the smell of burnt cedar.

This room is occupied by the beautiful Raxalla, Bzallin's most able and ambitious apprentice. She is joined by her invisible quasit familiar Yazbat and a mezzoloth using its *alter self* ability to resemble a human mage with a bald, tattooed head. Raxalla is trying to summon and ensnare a hordling using her newly-acquired *ensnarement* spell (see *PHB*, page 176). The mezzoloth is present in case the hordling somehow manages to escape from the magic circle. When the characters arrive, Raxalla has not yet completed her spell (which takes 1 full turn to cast). If her spell is interrupted, she is very upset!

Raxalla keeps her spellbook on an iron lectern positioned several feet from the circle. Both the book and the lectern have been rendered invisible by Raxalla's magic. Raxalla's *eyeglasses of sight* allow her to see the lectern and read the tome. She can also see through illusions cast by the characters as per the *true seeing* spell.

Raxalla (12th-level human mage): AL CE; AC 4 (*stoneskin* spell guards against first 9 attacks); MV 12; W12; hp 39; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon; SD infravision; regenerates 2 hp/round (granted by imp and *ioun stone*); MR 25% (granted by familiar); I 18, W 15, Ch 18; ML 14; XP 10,000; *bracers of defense* AC 4, *wand of fear* (63 charges), three *scrolls of protection* (vs. tanar'ri, paralyzation, magical weapons), four *ioun stones* (pale green ellipsoid absorbs 28 levels of 5th-8th level spells; pulsing red star grants +2 to saves vs. fire-based attacks; pearly white prism heals 1 hp damage/round; blue rhom-boid acts as *ring of free action), eyeglasses of sight.*

Spells memorized: *comprehend languages, detect magic, magic missile* (×2), *read magic; blindness, knock, mirror image, ray of enfeeblement; dispel magic, lightning bolt* (×2), *vampiric touch; confusion, Evard's black tentacles, polymorph other, wall of ice; contact other plane, dismissal, hold monster, wall of force; ensnarement* (already cast). Raxalla's spellbook is protected by a sepia snake sigil and contains an additional 1d10 1st-level, 1d8 2nd-level, 1d8 3rd-level, 1d8 4th-level, and 1d6 5th-level spells.

Yazbat (invisible quasit familiar): INT low; AL CE; AC 2; MV 15; HD 3; hp 15; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d4; SA fear, scratch (lose 1 point of Dexterity for 2d6 rounds; save vs. poison negates loss); SD infravision; invisibility; detect magic/good; save as 7-HD monster; regenerates 1 hp/round; immune to cold, fire, and lightning; only harmed by cold iron or magical weapons; MR 25%; SZ T (2' tall); ML 9; XP 2,000; *MM*/201 (imp). The quasit can *polymorph* itself into a large bat or rat (it's preferred form).

Mezzoloth: hp 82; see "Amazzar's Workroom" for complete statistics. This mezzoloth attacks with its claws and spells and does not carry a weapon.

Hordling: INT semi; AL NE; AC 1; MV 12; HD 8+1; hp 62; THAC0 10; #AT 2 tentacles/2 pincers/1 bite; Dmg 1d4+6/1d4+6/1d6+6/1d6+6/2d6+6; SA 18/00 strength, tentacles crush for 1d4+6 hp damage/round; gaze (treated as *ray of enfeeblement* vs. one opponent within 5'); SD infravision; immune to fire, acid, cold, gas, and poison; MR 15%; SZ L (9' tall, 6' broad); ML 7 (14 when summoned); XP 8,000; *PMC*/54.

Raxalla has no control over the hordling and will not release it from the magic circle. If anything passes over or

through the circle, the containment is broken and the hordling is unleashed. The hordling has a hunched back covered with bristles, a wide mouth filled with teeth, and three glowing red eyes. Sprouting from its sides are two strong arms ending in razor-sharp pincers and two 12' long tentacles which can crush prey for 1d4+6 hp damage/round. A bend bars roll at –10% is needed to break a tentacle's grip. Given a choice, the hordling attacks Raxalla first, followed by any creature within reach.

30. Laboratory.

Pushed against one wall of this chamber are two transparent crystal slabs, each a few inches thick, which hover in the air at table height. The crystal "tables" are covered with peculiar items, devices and trinkets of unknown origin. Built into another wall is a stone hearth, next to which is a small bucket of ashes and a shovel.

The crystal slabs are held aloft by permanent *levitate* spells. Each slab measures 10' × 3', weighs over 450 lbs., and can support an additional 150 lbs. of weight. Although their height above the floor is fixed, the slabs can be moved around with little effort. Both slabs are cluttered with pieces of jewelry, fragments of metal, and bits of cut glass.

Atop the floating slabs are numerous tools used by Bzallin and his apprentices in the meticulous construction of magic items. Among the more mundane items are the following magical constructs fully described in the *ENCYCLOPEDIA MAGICA* tome; a leather half-mask with crystal lenses (actually a *magemask*), a 12" black cube (a version of *Ohm's black box*), two 11" long black rods (actually exploding candles), and a *flask of curses* (opener automatically fails all saving throws). Characters can also find three scrolls (*enchant an item, fabricate,* and *enchanted weapon* cast at 19th-level). Other items of value include a crystal vat (450 gp) containing 15 assorted gems (5,000 gp (×6), 1,000 gp (×9)), three carved wands (none of which are enchanted), and spellbooks belonging to Dragen and Malloch.

Dragen, Malloch, Talica, and a simulacrum of Raxalla (see area **29**) are normally found here. However, if Dragen and Malloch were slain or captured in area **1**, only Talica and the simulacrum are present, along with Ajadarus if he teleported here from area **18.** Once alerted to intruders, Talica uses her scroll to summon 1d4 Abyss ants, renders herself invisible, and casts her *non-detection* spell for good measure. A *limited wish* spell has given the simulacrum a personality similar to Raxalla's, and it attacks with its wand or a barrage of offensive spells.

Dragen (9th-level human mage): AL CE; AC 3 or –2 *(stoneskin* protects against first 7 attacks); MV 12; W9; hp 30; THAC0 18; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg by spell, weapon or eye; SA magical eye (see below); I 17; ML 12; XP 7,000; *robe of protection* AC 5, *vest of protection +2, wand of armory* (22 charges; force field provides AC 0 and absorbs all magic missiles and electrical attacks), *crystalbrittle wand* (14 charges; emits a 60' long glittering white ray which affects any metal as a crystalbrittle spell), six *darts of stunning.*

Spells memorized: *burning hands, detect magic, magic missile, shocking grasp; darkness 15'radius, improved phantasmal force, knock; invisibility 10' radius, lightning bolt, slow; extension I, phantasmal killer; hold monster.* Dragen's spellbook is located atop one of the crystal slabs and is protected by an *avoidance* spell. In addition to the spells listed above, this book holds 1d8 1st-level, 1d8 2nd-level, 1d6 3rd-level, 1d6 4th-level and 1d4 5th-level spells.

Dragen lost his left eye in a back-alley brush with three drunken fighters. Embedded in the empty eye socket is a magical red crystal through which Dragen can cast *ray of enfeeblement* 3×/day. He may employ the eye attack in the same round he attacks with his dagger or *wand,* but not while casting a spell.

Malloch (8th-level human mage): AL CE; AC 6 (armor spell) or 0 (Dragen's *wand of armory*); MV 12; W8; hp 24; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon; I 17, Ch 6; ML 13; XP 6,000; *dagger +1, scabbard of poison* (contains Type D poison; save at –4), *staff of the sphere* (41 charges; described below).

Spells *memorized: charm person, chill touch, magic missile, unseen servant; detect invisibility, knock, Melf's acid arrow; hold person, invisibility 10' radius, lightning bolt; fear, polymorph self.* Malloch's spellbook is located atop one of the crystal slabs and is protected by an *ice trap* spell (this modified version of *fire trap* inflicts 1d4+8 hp damage). In addition to the above spells, it contains 1d8 1st-level, 1d8 2nd-level, 1d6 3rd-level and 1d6 4th-level spells.

Malloch borrowed his *staff of the sphere* from Bzallin. This device has the following spell-like powers (cast at 18th-level): *flaming sphere* (uses 1 charge), *Otiluke's resilient sphere* (uses 2 charges), *Otiluke's freezing sphere* (uses 3 charges), *Otiluke's telekinetic sphere* (uses 4 charges), *prismatic sphere* (expends 5 charges). A *contingency* spell cast upon the *staff* automatically teleports it to area **31** (as per the 7th-level *vanish* spell) if handled by someone other than Bzallin, Raxalla, Pentriss, Dragen, Malloch, or Talica.

Talica (7th-level half-elf mage): AL CE; AC –2; MV 12; W7; hp 25; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon or spell; D 17, I 18, Ch 17; SD 50% resistant to charm-related magic (30% racial resistance plus *amulet*); MR 20% (imparted by *amulet*); ML 12; XP 4,000; *bracers of defense* AC 3, *ring of protection +2, amulet of 20% magic resistance,* black *rod of energy draining* (drains 1 level by touch permanently, no save; to hit roll required), scroll (with *monster summoning III*).

Spells *memorized: change self, chill touch, light, magic missile; ESP, invisibility, mirror image; non-detection, suggestion; dimension door.* Talica's spellbook is hidden in her private quarters (area **15**).

Nothing tickles Talica's fancy like touching someone with her black *rod* or watching her summoned Abyss ants sting a hapless foe to death. Bzallin admires her sadistic streak but doesn't trust her loyalty. Bzallin's other apprentices feel much the same way.

Abyss ants (1d4): INT low; AL NE; AC 3; MV 18; HD 3; hp 18 each; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1d6 (bite)/1d6+2 (sting); SA spit acid (10' range; save vs. wand to avoid taking 2d4 hp damage); SZ S (2' long); ML 20; XP 175; *MCA.* Abyss ants are putrid pink. They always focus their attacks against one victim, never separate targets.

Raxalla's simulacrum: AL CE; AC 5 *(armor spell* and *cloak of protection* +1); MV 12; W6; hp 20; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon; SD magical weapons needed to hit; I 17; ML 20; XP 975; *PHB*/186; *bracers of defense* AC 7, *cloak of protection +1, wand of lightning bolts* (7 charges), two *ioun stones* (maroon star grants immunity to non-magical weapons; light blue prism

allows user to understand all spoken languages), *dagger +1*. The simulacrum was created by Bzallin during one of his lectures (see area **18**). His most favored apprentice, Raxalla, served as the model for this creation.

Spells memorized: *detect magic, magic missile* (×2), *read magic; knock, mirror image; lightning bolt* (×2). The simulacrum does not own its own spellbook.

31. Bzallin's Library. If Bzallin has cast his *guards and wards* spell, the first PC who approaches within 5' of the door is subjected to a *suggestion* spell (see "Guards and Wards" for details). Bzallin relies on his crystal ball with *clairaudience* to divine the party's location and thus cannot be surprised unless the PCs are protected against scrying magic.

> The door opens into a room lit by a green fire burning in a nearby hearth. Positioned in front of the fireplace is a large, padded armchair, and seated in the chair is a bearded man dressed in purple and black wizard's robes. Clutched in one his hands is a wooden staff capped with a large black gem, while positioned next to the chair is a *crystal ball* resting in a black, claw-shaped stand. The *crystal ball* is currently displaying a desolated city district that is slowly being consumed by the ever-growing *sphere of annihilation*. The two farthest walls of the chamber are lined with bookshelves. Packed into these shelves are thousands of dusty tomes.

Bzallin's library is not subject to the restrictions governing divination spells. To facilitate the use of his *crystal ball*, Bzallin permits divination spells to function normally in this area. Scrying magic used or cast within this room allows one to spy on other locations within and beyond the Cube.

Bzallin uses his *change self* spell to assume human form. If the party's arrival is imminent, he casts his *stoneskin, Serten's spell immunity,* and *mind blank* spells upon himself. He generally prefers his human appearance to that of a lich. He keeps his magical *talisman* around his neck but tucked under his *robe of the archmagi*. Clutched in his hands is a *staff of the magi*, while hidden at his side is a *bone of slaying* (used for melee attacks). The *crystal sphere* next to the chair is Bzallin's *crystal ball with clairaudience*, which he uses to spy on the characters or the *sphere of annihilation* in Horizon. The green flame in the fireplace is a permanent spectral force which provides the chamber with moderate light, but no heat. Bzallin's shadow fiend henchman, Gloomwhisper, conceals itself behind the throne and strikes only if Bzallin is threatened. In this chamber, the shadow fiend has AC 5.

Wearing the *talisman* has left Bzallin fatigued. The lich suffers a –1 initiative penalty and a +1 penalty to his spell casting times.

Bzallin the lich (19th-level wizard): AL CE; AC 0 (*stoneskin* protects against first 11 attacks; also see below); MV 6; HD 16 (W19); hp 100; THAC0 5; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10; SA spells, fear aura (affects creatures of 5 HD or fewer only); touch causes paralysis (lasts until dispelled); SD +1 weapons needed to hit; +2 bonus to saves vs. spells (+3 total; granted by staff), additional bonus granted by *Serten's spell immunity* (see *PHB*, page 192); impervious to mind-affecting attacks and scrying (granted by *mind blank* spell); MR 50% (granted by *ring* and *robe*); immune to *sleep, charm, enfeeblement, polymorph, cold, electricity, insanity,* and *death* spells; I 20, W 18; SZ M; ML 18; XP 30,000; *MM*/222.

Magical equipment: *ring of wizardry* (doubles number of 5th-level spells), *ring of 45% magic resistance, black robe of the archmagi* (+5% magic resistance; imposes –4 penalty to saves and –20% magic resistance modifier to victim when Bzallin casts *charm person / monster, hold person / monster, friends, polymorph other* or *suggestion), staff of the magi* (contains 20 stored levels of spell energy; see the *Encyclopedia Magica* tome, page 1283 or the *DMG*, page 154 for specifics), *bone of slaying* (+3 to hit, 1d4 hp damage; roll of 19 or 20 indicates victim has been struck dead; save vs. magic allowed), *talisman of the sphere* (see "Bzallin's Talisman" sidebar).

Spells memorized: *change self* (already cast), *charm person, detect magic, magic missile* (×2); *blur, detect invisibility, ESP, know alignment, web; dispel magic, hold person* (×2), *lightning bolt, suggestion; detect scrying, improved invisibility, polymorph other, shout, stoneskin; animate dead* (×2), *cloudkill, cone of cold* (×2), *contact other plane, dismissal, feeblemind, telekinesis, teleport; death spell, guards and wards* (already cast), *invisible stalker* (already cast); *finger of death, prismatic spray, spell turning; mind blank, polymorph any object, Serten's spell immunity; Mordenkainen's disjunction.*

If the party is equipped with several magic items, Bzallin casts his *Mordenkainen's disjunction* the instant the PCs violate the room. The lich's possessions are not affected, and Bzallin is careful not to catch his crystal ball in the 30' radius area of effect. He follows up with his least obliterating offensive spells first *(shout, hold person, feeblemind, finger of death, death spell, prismatic spray, polymorph any object, magic missile)* then proceeds with more destructive magic *(lightning bolt, cone of cold,* and the staff's *ice storm).*

Bzallin is protected by a *stoneskin* spell which absorbs all damage from the first 11 attacks. When the *stoneskin* spell is depleted, Bzallin relies on his low AC and magic resistance to negate most attacks.

If reduced to 20 hp or fewer, Bzallin cracks his *staff of the magi* in a retributive strike. Luckily, the lich has already prepared a *contingency* spell for this. An instant before the explosion, Bzallin is teleported safely to area **22.** Once there, he removes the *cubic gate* from the prismatic sphere. Bzallin does not surrender his *talisman* under any circumstances. He uses the *cubic gate* to flee to the Abyss and eventually makes his way to the layer ruled by J'zzalshrak. If the lich manages to escape, the characters may not be able to track him down in time to save Horizon (DM's determination, based on the actions of the PCs).

In addition to its spell-casting properties, Bzallin's *staff of the magi* has a large black gem affixed to its tip. The gem is worth 10,000 gp intact. Gloomwhisper the shadow fiend may use the gem as a receptacle when employing its *magic jar* attack. Any life force trapped in the gem is instantly destroyed if the *staff* is used in a retributive strike.

Gloomwhisper (shadow fiend): INT very; AL CE; AC 9 (bright light), 5 (dim light) or 1 (darkness); MV 12; HD 7+3; hp 44; THAC0 13 (12 in dim lighting, 11 in darkness); #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d8; SA spring, *magic jar* (victim's life force is contained in the gem of Bzallin's *staff*); SD suffers half damage from weapons (in darkness only); immune to fire, cold, and electricity; cast *darkness 15' radius* or *fear* (15' radius) once/day; turned as "special" undead; SZ M; ML 15; XP 2,000; *PMC*/86.

Bzallin's library is stacked with hundreds of valuable tomes worth thousands of gold pieces. Many of the books are cursed or booby-trapped, and reading them would take a lifetime, literally. Bzallin's spellbooks (of which there are dozens) contain 95% of the spells in the *PHB* as well as selected spells from other sources. In addition to the spellbooks, inquisitive PCs find a fat libram titled *The Book of Vile Death*. This gruesome tome outlines the process of turning oneself into a lich and can only be understood by wizards of 17th-level or higher. Bzallin has promised this evil tome to Zhargaunt the necromancer. Any good-aligned PC who opens it unleashes 13 angry spectres (see "Bzallin's Citadel" for statistics). The DM may choose to augment the lich's book collection with one or two unique spellbooks detailed in the *ENCYCLOPEDIA MAGICA* tome.

If Bzallin's yugoloths succeeded in killing Amazzar and returning with his corpse (see "Part One"), the animated corpse is standing in the corner by the fireplace. Bzallin may order the zombie to attack intruders.

Amazzar (zombie): INT non-; AL N; AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 13; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SD immune to *sleep, charm, hold, paralysis, poison, death magic,* and cold-based attacks; SZ M; ML 20; XP 65; *MM*/373.

Concluding the Adventure

If Bzallin is destroyed, the magical barriers which hold his Cube together inexplicably begin to dissolve. The entire complex begins to shudder. Within 1d10+6 rounds, Bzallin's Cube implodes, instantly killing every living creature within (no save). Every object and magic item inside the lair is lost forever, except for artifacts and relics. These are blown into the Astral plane. Characters should have just enough time to make good their escape. Characters unable to reach to teleporter dais in area 1 may use Bzallin's *cubic gate* (see area **22**), a *plane shift* spell, or some other method of departure. If Bzallin's *talisman* is left behind, it is blown into the Astral plane and set adrift (until found by an astral-travelling wizard or githyanki warband), and Bzallin's blacksphere begins shrinking as outlined in the "Bzallin's Talisman" sidebar.

If the characters return to Horizon with the *talisman,* either Amazzar or the party wizard can use a *gate* spell to collapse the *sphere of annihilation* once it has shrunk to its original diameter. (See "Origins of the Sphere" for chances of success). Optionally, PCs may use the *rod of cancellation* from area **22** to destroy the *sphere* (once its size has been safely reduced).

If Amazzar was slain in "Part One" of the adventure but the PCs were successful nonetheless, Glynn Palderus may offer Amazzar's post to the party mage. Any PC who accepts this position has instant notoriety as well as complete access to Horizon's extensive library (and possibly libraries throughout the civilized realm). Non-wizard characters may be given positions of command in the local militia or land on which to build a residence, guildhall, or temple. Word of the party's heroism spreads quickly throughout the kingdom, and PCs who have neither holdings nor henchmen may find themselves swamped with employment offers, able squires, devoted acolytes, and/or eager apprentices. If Amazzar was slain but later raised or resurrected, he shows his gratitude by allowing the PCs to use his personal library or take whatever magic items they need from his workroom.

If Bzallin and his *sphere of annihilation* are destroyed, J'zzalshrak will no doubt seek retribution. Not noted for her subtlety, this vile tanar'ri lord sends emissaries to trouble the PCs in the near future. The party will have earned the enmity and derision of a terrible and powerful adversary. Ω

The Dukes of Baldur's Gate also tell the PCs that they must be discreet about this adventure. There is another temple of Umberlee known as the Water Queen's House in the city and the mission against the Grotto was secret.

Surviving PCs should receive a 25,000 XP story award plus XP for monsters defeated. Also, they should receive 250 XP for each prisoner rescued from the Grotto of the Queen and 100 XP per prisoner rescued from Lathtarl's Lantern.

Future adventures are almost limitless. Tales of buried treasure at sea and along the Sword Coast abound. Platonus is still at large and no doubt planning something more evil for his enemies the next time. He is now not the only one who wants the PCs' heads on spikes: Umberlee's watery plane on the Abyss will undoubtedly churn with anger until those who desecrated her place of worship are brought to her justice.

In this regard, there is a good chance that Umberlina escaped, and if so, it is a solid bet that she arrives at the Water Queen's House in Baldur's Gate and advises Storm-Priestess Jalantha Mistmyr (See *Forgotten Realms Adventures,* page 76) of the PCs' actions. This Priestess, who is much stronger and has more followers than Umberlina, is outraged. If Jalantha becomes involved, she makes certain that there is no place in Faerûn the adventurers can hide. If they did not have a nemesis at the beginning of this adventure, they surely have one now. Ω

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LAST DANCE

BY JEFF CROOK

To die for

Artwork by Mark Nelson
Cartography by Michael Scott

Jeff writes: "I have recently had the good fortune to return to college to complete my degree. By the time of this publication, I will have moved back to Memphis and begun the last 36 hours of my college education. I would like to thank my wife for making this possible by finally graduating herself. Maybe now she can get a job. (Just kidding.)"

"Last Dance" is an AD&D® RAVENLOFT® adventure for 4–7 player characters of 2nd–4th levels (about 16 total levels). As always, a well balanced party works best, but a thief should take part. The adventure is set in the city of Pont-à-Museau in the domain of Richemulot in the demi-plane of dread. Jerretiere, the estate on which the adventure is set, is located in the northeast corner of the city, directly over an underground canal that flows into the Musarde River. With revisions to the beginning, the adventure could be set as a small island domain lost in the mists.

The DM should be familiar with the general rules explored in the RAVENLOFT *Realm of Terror* boxed set. Pay particular attention to horror checks and the effects on magic in Ravenloft.

Since the villain in this adventure is not the lord of a domain and does not yet wield any special powers such as would be granted by the Dark Powers of Ravenloft, this adventure could be altered to fit any standard campaign world. With revisions, it would fit especially well in the Gothic Earth setting of *Masque of the Red Death*, in a city such as Paris or New Orleans.

For the Players

The PCs are approached by a tall, somber fellow who is looking for adventurers. Where this initial meeting takes place is up to the DM. The standard old chestnut is to have the PCs approached while lounging about an inn. In the encounter described below, the PCs are strolling down an avenue in Pont-à-Museau.

> As you turn a corner, you enter Rue de Cordone, where the lords and ladies of Pont-à-Museau stroll on summer afternoons. This afternoon is no different. The walks are crowded with nobles and wealthy merchants. Some of these fine people are closely followed by their bodyguards, swaggering bravos in shining mail, while not a few of the wealthier lords wear

their jewel-studded swords openly. The rich and elite exchange pleasantries and jostle silken sleeves and skirts as they pass, while the alleys ring with the cries of beggars.

In many places, the cafe tables spill out into the street, forcing both strollers and carriages to detour. The ancient trees that line this avenue spread their heavy boughs over all, and as the sun dips toward the horizon and the westerly breeze blows in from the river, the street is dappled by a shifting golden light. Somewhere in the distance, you hear a languorous iron bell toll six times.

With a jangle of harness and a steady clop-clop of hooves, a black carriage passes down the street. You notice that it pulls to the side and its driver dismounts, but rather than open the carriage door, he fixes his dark eyes upon you and approaches. He is a tall thin man with heavy brows and a long hooked nose. As he comes nearer, you see that his dark jacket, though brushed and clean, is frayed at the cuffs, and the knees of his trousers are worn thin. There is a queer smell about this man, but you cannot identify the odor.

He stops before you and says, "Madame Tuvache wishes to speak with you in her carriage." He indicates with a bony finger the black carriage parked down the street.

If the PCs ask questions before being led to the carriage, the chauffeur repeats that Madame Tuvache wishes to speak with them, adding that he believes it is about a commission for an adventure. If the PCs refuse to meet with Madame Tuvache at this time, at least two more attempts should be made (one later that evening and another the following day) before she decides that the PCs are too wary to become manageable victims.

If the PCs agree to meet with Madame Tuvache, the chauffeur leads them to the carriage and opens the door. The carriage seats four people including Madame Tuvache, so any extra PCs must wait outside. Madame speaks with the PCs only if they agree to enter and sit in her carriage. As an excuse, she claims that she is a clockmaker and that long years of work over tiny instruments have made her eyes extremely sensitive to light. Read or paraphrase the following only after the PCs have entered the carriage:

The chauffeur closes the door, and you feel the carriage rock and sway as he climbs up to his seat at the front. The interior of the carriage is black as pitch, with dark curtains shrouding all the windows, so that only a pale gray light filters through the fabric. As your eyes become adjusted to the darkness of the carriage, you see a short, middle-aged woman of ponderous girth, dressed in a long black gown. Her dark eyes peer out at you from the depths of her chubby face, and her iron-gray hair is piled high upon her head giving her an additional foot of height. "What a formidable-looking lot you are," she says in a slow drawl.

The interview with Madame Tuvache should be played with great care. The PCs should not get the feeling that they are being lured to their deaths, but at the same time they should feel that something is not quite right. Before stating her case and asking for the PCs' help, Madame asks for their names and inquires about their origins, professions, previous experiences, etc. She often dotes upon a particular PC, telling him how interesting it must be to be a wizard (priest, etc.).

Madame Tuvache is 4' 5" tall in her stocking feet, but for the interview she wears 3" high-heeled pointy shoes. She weighs a ponderous 160 lbs. (thus her slow movement rate); in her ankle-length black evening dress, she looks like a large cannonball. Her iron-gray hair is piled into a foot-tall beehive held together by jeweled pins (17, worth 25 gp each) and a silvery fine-mesh net (worth 10 gp); this makes her hair look like it is pasted together with spider webs. She wears a long string of pearls (180 gp) wrapped three times below her chin. She also wears a simple wedding band (35 gp) which she took from a previous victim. Her eyes are dark brown and almost buried in the flesh of her face; she applies generous amounts of mascara to draw them out. She paints her lips bright red and rouges her cheeks heavily, but this only serves to emphasize her pallid flesh. Long years spent in near total darkness have turned her skin fish-belly white. As a result of the touch of the Dark Powers, she prefers the darkness and shies away from bright lights. Madame Tuvache has one of those accents that makes it nearly impossible to place her origin. During the interview in the carriage, Madame rests her hands on a small iron chest lying on her lap. The chest is locked and contains five bags. Each bag holds 75 gold pieces.

Madame Araby Tuvache: AL LE; AC 10; MV 6; 0-level human; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; S 6, D 13, C 14, I 17, W 11, Ch 14; ML 12; XP 175; small stiletto dagger (1–2/1).

Madame Tuvache carries a stiletto (that has been dipped in poison) hidden in her bodice. The poison is silver-mercurium and is made by a local alchemist. This virulent toxin is both poison types E and J, so it can be administered in food or drink or applied to a weapon, with somewhat differing effects (see *DMG* page 73). In addition, this poison has the magical ability to slay werebeasts. Any weapon coated with silver-mercurium is treated as silver for the purpose of hitting creatures struck only by silver weapons; the victim must save vs. poison or die. Necessarily, this rare poison is expensive. A one-ounce vial costs 1,000 gp; this is enough to coat one dagger-sized object for one use, or to poison up to 10 people when administered to food or drink. The poison diffuses nicely in liquid, leaving only a slightly oily appearance and metallic smell, hardly noticeable at all. The secret of its making is known only to the local alchemist (not appearing in this adventure).

The chauffeur is described in greater detail at area **13.**

After a short session of small talk, Madame at last comes to her point:

"There is a monster in my basement! Oh, do not fear, for I have locked the door and trapped it inside, but sometimes it creates such a ruckus that I fear I will go out of my mind. Most of my servants have left me, and I am in desperate straits. Won't you help me? I do not know what sort of monster it is, but it does howl so fearfully sometimes, and it growls and sniffs about my cellar door. I have no idea how the thing came to be there. There must be some old secret passage linked to the city's underground canals, but I have no way of knowing. I will pay you well to eliminate this monster."

Madame then opens the chest mentioned above and gives each PC one of the small bags of gold. She continues, saying that if they need weapons, her house is filled with all sorts of old swords and such, which they can take

Puppetworks of Jerretiere

Madame Tuvache has created an immense puppetworks of preserved human corpses throughout her house. Each corpse has been carefully embalmed by Madame's servant Graves, cut into sections, and meticulously wired together at most joints to allow full movement. The puppet-corpses are attached by thin, almost invisible wires to the preprogrammed movements of the house/machine. When the machine is running, different groups of corpses can be engaged to perform specific actions, whether dancing or dining or fighting. However, these puppets can only follow the preprogrammed actions of the machine, and because of the complexity of even the simplest action, each puppet-corpse can perform only one simple action, repeated endlessly. For example, one warrior-puppet might perform an overhead slash with an axe, while another might thrust with a spear, yet both are incapable of performing any other action without reprogramming. Since all puppet actions are preprogrammed and simple, the PCs may, after one round of observation per puppet, decipher and unravel the limit and scope of the puppets' action, and so completely avoid them if desired.

In this adventure, some of the puppets are programmed to dance an endless summer waltz or to sit at table mindlessly imitating the actions of eating. These puppets have no attack values. Others are designed specifically for fighting and are used to prevent anyone from escaping the house. These warrior-puppets have weapons wired to their hands, but since they are puppets, any blow they inflict with a weapon lacks power; the damage inflicted depends mainly on the weight and sharpness of the weapon, and is therefore low (1–3 hp damage). Similarly, their Armor Class is poor because they have no ability to avoid a blow. Whenever any puppet suffers damage, its preserved flesh chips and flakes from its skeleton, revealing the yellow bones beneath. When all hit points are lost, either the puppet is damaged beyond effective use, or it has been cut from its strings and falls to the floor. When the PCs first do damage to a puppet, they discover the hideous nature of these creatures and must make a horror check unless they have seen a damaged puppet somewhere else in the house.

and use as they need. Her only desire, she claims, is to have this monster destroyed.

If the PCs agree to help her, she asks them to come to her house tomorrow afternoon:

> You cannot miss my house. My old clock tower can be seen from many places around the city, and you can hear it toll the hours for miles around. If you become lost, just ask for Jerretiere — that is my estate — and anyone in the city can direct you to it.

If the PCs ask around about Madame Tuvache before they visit Jerretiere, the following information can be obtained:

❖ Madame lives alone in her dead husband's house; her only servant is the old chauffeur.

❖ There was a rumor many years ago that Madame Tuvache poisoned her husband because of some illicit affair, but it has never been proven.

❖ When Monsieur Tuvache died most of the servants quit. Because there was no public funeral, most people believe that Monsieur Tuvache was buried somewhere on the estate.

❖ About 15 years ago, Madame Tuvache added a clock tower to the southern wing of the house, but the Vistani workers would not talk about what they were doing or what they had seen inside the house.

For the Dungeon Master

The domain of Richemulot is controlled by Jacqueline Renier, a wererat. In Ravenloft, the lord of a domain wields absolute power within that domain, but there are always creatures and NPCs of lesser degrees of evil who are given certain measures of power by the Dark Powers. Some of these lordlings seem ready to take over whenever the lord of the domain meets his or her demise, while others are content with their own little corner of evil and aspire to nothing greater. Jacqueline Renier is aware of the past actions Madame Tuvache, but she does not yet consider her a threat to her power. Likewise, the PCs' actions during this adventure are unlikely to warrant her attention.

Jerretiere is the ancestral home of the Tuvache family and the setting for this adventure. Before attempting to play this adventure, the DM should become intimately familiar with Madame Tuvache, her motives and motivations, idiosyncrasies, and methods. The horrors she has witnessed and committed have driven her into the clutches of the Dark Powers of Ravenloft. Now she spends her time luring people to their deaths, all to further her demented schemes. She is a poisoner and mechanical genius, with a mad bent toward the grotesque.

The Sad Case of Madame Araby Tuvache

Araby Dunsany was 19 years old when she was married against her will to a man she did not know. His name was Renault Tuvache, and because Araby's father owed him money, Renault took the youngest Dunsany daughter in payment. Araby was a talented dancer and the most beautiful and intelligent of the Dunsany daughters, and Renault had seen her at several social events. Renault was a man embraced by the Dark Powers of Ravenloft.

Araby Dunsany found herself in a strange house with a stranger man. Renault was a darkly handsome man, rugged, with mesmerizing eyes. His charms, when he wanted to be charming, were without measure, and soon Araby found herself strangely attracted to him. But although the two were married, Araby rarely encountered her husband. His mysterious comings and goings fired her curiosity, and often she plotted to follow him, but his cruel servants always stopped her. They took great pleasure in locking her in her room, so she would sit at her window and watch for her husband to return. After a few months, she began to fall in love with him, for he was mysterious, he was powerful, and he was the only thing she had.

But in the meantime, she longed for something to entertain her mind. Araby was an extremely intelligent girl, and every hour she spent in the old drafty Tuvache home, wandering from room to room, staring out the windows or spying on the servants, was a drudgery and a toil. Her only refuge was the library, where she spent many a pleasurable hour lost in fanciful romances or learning new sciences. One book in particular fascinated her starved mind. It was a book about clockmaking.

One day, the clock on the mantle in the library stopped running. Araby used what she had learned from the book to repair it. The intricacies of the clockwork mechanism, the interlinking gears and wheels and springs, were to her soul a beauty only rivaled by that of a well-performed ballet; she saw in the clock a rhythm and balance not unlike that of a waltz.

One night, Renault held a grand ball, but he locked Araby in her room. She longed for the pleasure of company and to dance again, but Renault refused her pleas. She sat alone in her room and listened to the music and the laughter, and from her window she watched carriage after carriage stop at the gate, watched beautifully dressed couples dancing on the lawn in the summer moonlight, her husband dancing with other women. She was determined to escape her room and join the ball, so she set herself to opening her door, but it took most of the night to pick the lock. By then the party was almost over.

Quietly, Araby slipped into the hallway. Her ball gown whispered over the polished wooden floors. The music had stopped, but she heard the murmur of conversation from the direction of the ballroom. She glided through the shadows down the hall until she reached the balcony. From its height, she saw her husband and a small group of other revelers suddenly transform into horrid wererats and devour an unwitting, party-goer who had stayed too long. The poor woman's dying screams reverberated through the halls as Araby fled back to her room.

The following day, under the excuse of going to market, Araby visited an alchemist, and with her wedding ring she purchased a vial of silver-mercurium, an insidious poison so powerful it could slay werebeasts, as well as any other living creature. She introduced the poison into the evening meal. By morning she was a widow in control of the Tuvache estate.

To her dismay, she discovered that she was nearly broke and that the estate was in shambles. In desperation she opened a dance academy in the grand ballroom. Her students were few and her desperate venture failed. Most of the servants vanished when Renault died, and Araby was unable to pay those that remained, so all but Graves left her, and he remained only because he had been with the family since he was a boy. He was a strange, silent man, tall and thin as an undertaker. His frightening face was long and pale, with dark deep-set eyes and a long narrow nose, but he had been the only one of the servants who had not been cruel to Araby. In fact, it was he who had driven her to the alchemist's shop, and he had kept her secret.

One evening, Araby heard a commotion in the basement. She called Graves, and together they warily descended the dark stairs and crossed the cold basement floor. They found a secret door. Behind it lay a passage that led deeper into the earth. The tunnel finally brought them to an underground canal that passed beneath the Tuvache estate. Here they found the cause of the commotion. A group of adventurers had met their fate here, killed by the giant rats that thrive in the underground canals of Pont-à-Museau. Araby was astonished by how much gold she found on the dead bodies, so with Graves' help she stripped them of their belongings and shoved them into the cold water.

As the years passed, Madame Tuvache began to lure people to her basement, where she would lock them in and let the rats have them, only to loot their poor remains. She was eventually embraced by the Dark Powers, and their evil touch drove her ever deeper into madness. Finally, her newly-found wealth inspired a terrible scheme — to recreate the grand ball she had so sadly missed.

Layout and Design of Jerretiere

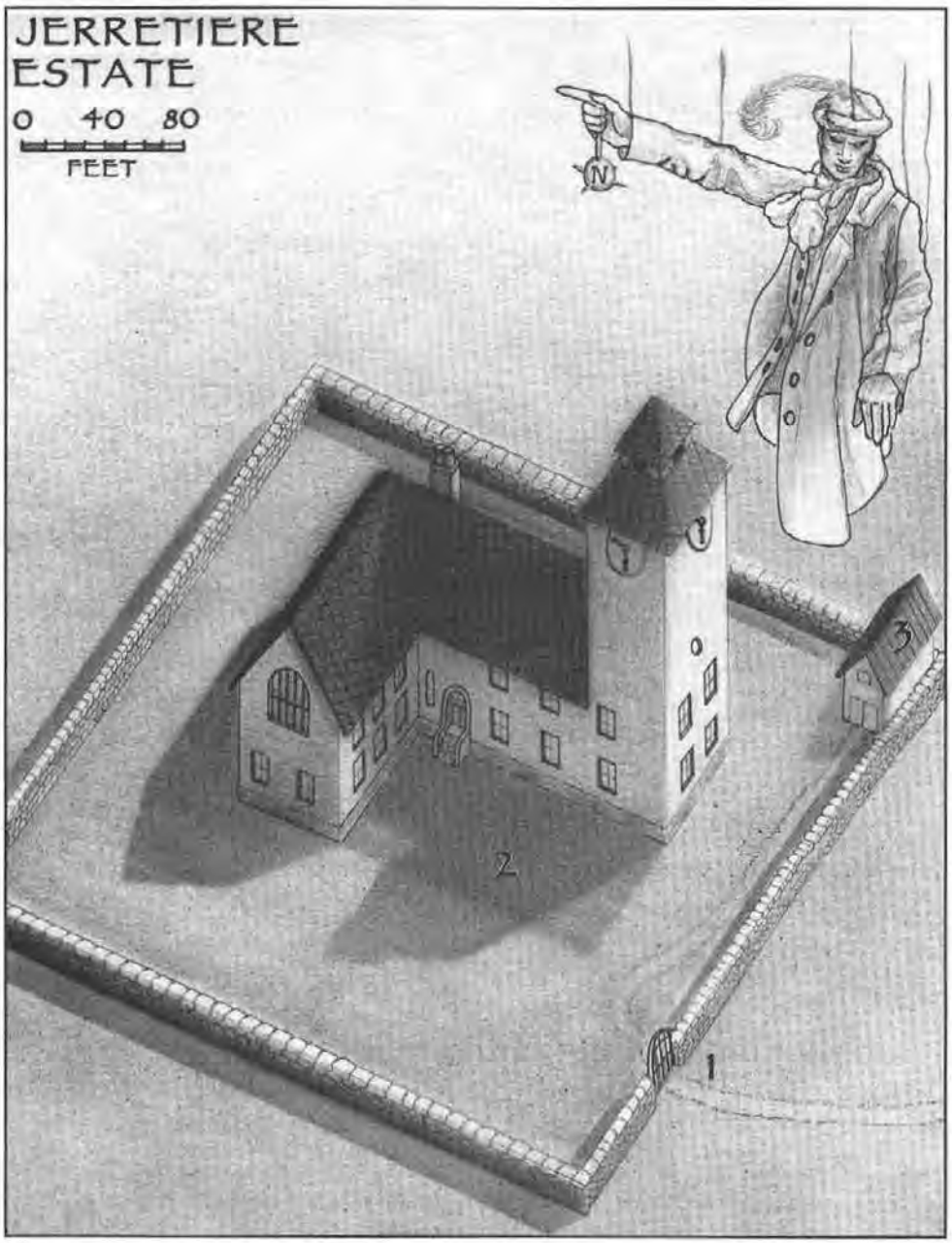
Today, the Tuvache house is a giant machine, a product of the genius of Madame Tuvache. A water wheel in the basement powers an intricate machine of gears, pulleys, and shafts, all to drive an immense puppet-works of preserved human corpses. Madame Tuvache, with her knowledge of clockworks, and her servant Graves (who learned taxidermy) have created a gigantic mechanical grand ball, complete with music, dancing, and elegant attire. Since the old corpses occasionally wear out or are damaged, she has devised a scheme to lure brave souls to their deaths. She hires out for adventurers to rid her basement of a monster, only to trap them in the deadly place.

When the PCs enter the basement, they find themselves trapped in the room with a deadly device. If they escape the basement, Madame Tuvache has groups of warrior-puppets and deadly traps to prevent them from escaping the house. As the PCs explore the house they run up against many of her devices and designs, as well as discovering the cast-away goods and last reminders of some of her victims. To keep tabs on anyone intruding on the second level of the house, Madame has created a system of peepholes throughout the attic. Unless otherwise specified, all of the windows are locked, barred, and completely covered by thick drapes and curtains. When she believes that she is safe, Madame Tuvache wanders the house or reads in the library. When on the hunt (or being hunted by the PCs), she retires to room **29** to activate and control her machine. Also, as the PCs explore the house, they can easily keep track of time by the hourly tolling of the clock in the clock tower. It chimes so loudly that it shakes small objects and rattles the window panes. Dust falls from the ceilings, and sometimes framed paintings drop from the walls.

As is usual with any location-based adventure, it may become necessary to alter specific descriptions. For instance, if the PCs decide not to help Madame Tuvache and prefer instead to break into and explore her house, most of the descriptions given below must be altered. If she does not suspect that the PCs are in her house, Madame Tuvache does not remain in the same room waiting for them to encounter her. It is advised, in any case, that sometime during the adventure Madame should activate her machine, perhaps to join the dancers in a summer waltz in the Grand Ballroom. If at any time she learns of the PCs' secret entry, she immediately retreats to her control room (room **29**) and activates her machine.

The Nightmare Has Only Begun

So powerful is Madame's will and spirit that, should she be slain during this adventure, she does not truly die. Instead, the Dark Powers grant her a new life and a new form, that of a Greater Animator. She becomes much more dangerous and difficult to defeat, and as such she warrants the attention of the Lord of Richemulot, Jacqueline Renier (see "Concluding the Adventure").



As a Greater Animator, Madame Tuvache is referred to as "Jerretiere" in the adventure. After Madame's death, Jerretiere becomes an entity, a physical extension of Madame's malignant will. Within one turn, all parts of the house glow with an eerie blue light. The glow persists for several rounds, growing in intensity until it finally vanishes with a loud bang, as a tremor ripples throughout the estate.

When playing Jerretiere, it is helpful to remember certain aspects of the house and how the adventure works. In the house, some rooms have a description followed by a possible encounter that occurs only after Madame Tuvache has activated her machine. Also, some rooms have further encounters highlighted in a gray box. These encounters occur only if Madame is slain and her spirit possesses the house. Unlike the role fulfilled by most Greater Animators, Jerretiere has no ward or source of the dark emotions on which to feed. Instead, she finds that she can derive sustenance from the fear and terror of those trapped inside the house. All her future actions are directed towards maintaining this food source, both by securing her victims inside the house, and by luring new victims to the estate.

Jerretiere — Greater Animator: INT exceptional; AL LE; AC varies; MV nil; HD 12; hp 1,000; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1–12; SA spells; SD spell immunity; MR nil; SZ G; ML 14; XP 26,000; *Ravenloft Monstrous Compendium Appendix III,* pages 10–13.

She uses her great Strength (19) to slam doors and gates, attempting to smash unwitting PCs in the process; this requires an attack roll and inflicts 1d12 hp damage. She can also hold any door or window open or closed. PCs must match her Strength or make an Open Doors roll to move a held door.

Jerretiere can cast the following innate spell-like powers twice per day at 12th-level ability: *animate dead, animate object, weather summoning, control temperature 10' radius, control winds, cantrip, summon swarm,* and *summon insects.* The text below indicates when some of these powers could be used. Jerretiere can also use these abilities to defend herself against direct attack. For instance, if the PCs attempt to set the house afire, Jerretiere casts *weather summoning* to summon a rainstorm to extinguish the flames.

She is immune to *sleep, charm, hold,* and poison. Her Armor Class is dictated by the specific part of the house that the PCs are attempting to damage. Wooden doors have an AC of 5, while the iron gate (below) is AC 1. Similarly, a wooden door must suffer 30 hp damage to render its attack ineffective. Jerretiere is aware of everything that happens on the estate; no one can break into the house without her knowing, the PCs cannot whisper their plans without her overhearing (see exception, room **8**). Her power to control any moving part of the house or to animate any object or dead creature, extends to the boundary wall of the estate. As indicated below, upon first becoming an Animator, Jerretiere animates certain skeletons and corpses in the house; these are the limit of her *animate dead* spells for the first day. On the following day, she can animate the remainder of the dead in the house, including any slain PCs. The only corpse she does not animate is Renault (see room **15**).

Jerretiere Estate

1. The Gate. A path leads from the main road across a lot overgrown with weeds to the gate described below:

> The lichen-encrusted stone wall beside the path is just tall enough to prevent anyone from seeing over it into the yard, but it cannot hide the clock tower of a grand old house rising up from the once-stately grounds. A wrought-iron gate hangs on the wall near its southwestern corner. Set in the stone beside the gate is a tarnished bronze plaque that reads "Jerretiere." Below it, half covered in a growth of thorny weeds, lies a rotted wooden sign whose carefully painted red letters have nearly been erased by the years. You can just make out the words "Jerretiere Dance Academy."

The gate is unlocked and in good condition.

2.The Grounds

> Other than the dead grass and occasional clumps of weeds, the grounds are devoid of vegetation. No trees shelter the house from the harsh rays of the sun, no shrubs or flowers soften its severe lines. A rutted lane leads from the gate to the southeast corner of the estate, where a small carriage-house leans against the outer wall.
>
> The house itself is large and imposing, seeming to loom ever higher as you approach. It is of an ancient design, from its green tiled roof and weather-grayed stucco exterior to its small-paned, iron-barred windows and thick stone foundation. The lofty clock tower rises against the sky, casting its long shadow across the grounds of the estate. Sickly green ivy straggles up its cracked walls, while squawking black rooks flutter in and out of the belfry. The house's many dark windows are covered by thick curtains, as though the occupants wish no sunlight to penetrate the interior.

During the day, Madame's two carriage horses are allowed to roam the grounds and graze on what vegetation they can find. The horses are worth 100 gp each. At night, the horses retire to their stalls on the north side of the carriage house. Early in the morning and late in the evening, Graves can be found here tending the horses.

If the PCs make their escape from the house, Jerretiere can animate the carriage (see below) and attack them with it.

3.The Carriage House. The main doors to the carriage house are kept locked except when the carriage is being used. A small opening above the main doors leads to the loft. On the north side of the building are the stalls for Madame's horses.

3a. Lower Level.

> The interior of this building is dark and dusty and smells of hay, manure, and grease. Most of the space here is occupied by a large black carriage; the tack and harnesses have been carefully hung on the north wall. In the southeast corner of the room you see two large barrels; both are filled with oats. Occasionally, a breeze blows through the building, bringing a rain of dust and hay from the loft above. At the rear of the building, a low wall allows a view of the horses' stalls. Here, you also notice a wooden ladder leading up to the loft.

In addition to the items named above, the PCs may find a number of shovels and chopping axes, brushes and curry combs, pitchforks, hammers, and saws. A lantern hangs by the door, but it is empty and must be filled with oil before lighting. A container of lamp oil can be found on a shelf above the barrels of oats. There is nothing else of interest here.

> Jerretiere can animate the carriage and use it to attack the PCs. Although the carriage is much too large to be animated entirely, she can animate the front wheels, causing the carriage to roll along the ground, pursuing the PCs in an attempt to crush them beneath its wheels. After opening the doors of the carriage house, the carriage rolls out onto the grounds and attacks the PCs for 12 rounds (spell's duration) or until destroyed.

Animated Carriage: INT 0; AL LE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 4; hp 50; THAC0 17; Dmg 3d6; MR nil; SZ L; ML special; XP 175.

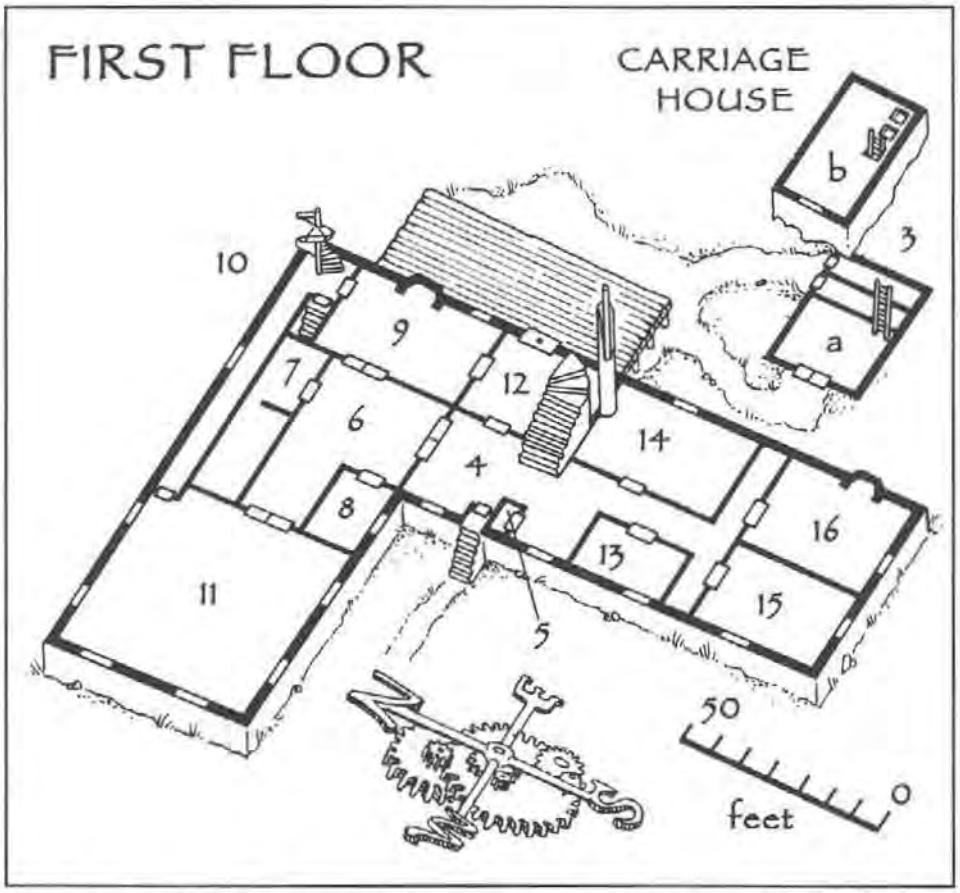
3b. The Loft. PCs climbing up here find the loft filled with hay. Several coils of copper wire and a bundle of 10'-long bronze rods have been stacked in one corner. Hay is loaded into the loft through a small hatch at the west side of the building, and dropped to the horses through holes over the stalls.

First Floor

4. Grand Hall. The front door is reached by a short stair; the door frame is set deep into the thick walls of the house. The door is locked, and it has a heavy knocker made of bronze. After the PCs knock on the door, read or paraphrase the following:

> It is not long before you hear a bolt sliding back, followed by the turning of a key in a lock. Slowly the door swings open, revealing the tall somber chauffeur. He steps back, motioning for you to enter. The interior of the house is dark, and the servant has a tall yellow candle to light the way. "Madame will be along directly," he says slowly.
>
> The servant directs you to an arrangement of couches set in the center of the north half of the room. As your eyes become adjusted to the faint light of his candle, you see the quaint antique style of the room's furnishings — the gilded mirror now smoky with age and dust, the curio propped up at one corner with a brick because its carved leg is broken. A tall clock stands against the wall beside the staircase. Its shiny pendulum is still, and the hour hand is missing.
>
> The couches are arranged for conversation, and it is to these ancient seats that the servant leads you. The servant stands aside and silently waits.
>
> Soon, you hear a voice call from above, "Welcome! Welcome to Jerretiere!" Despite the shadows, you cannot miss the dark squat form of your hostess as she ponderously descends the large ornate staircase winding away into the shadows of the east side of the room, opposite the entryway. "I am indeed glad you have come. I fear I could not spend another night in this house, dear as it is to me."
>
> Even in the middle of the day, this room, like most of the others, is cloaked in darkness by the heavy curtains that cover the windows.

Madame asks the PCs if there is anything they need before they begin. She sends Graves to fetch torches or weapons as needed. There is a 50%



chance that he brings the magical *short sword +1* found in the Cloak Room (area **25**) if the PCs ask specifically for a short sword. If asked only for a sword, the chance is reduced to 20%. Neither Graves nor Madame has any idea of the sword's magical properties.

When the PCs indicate that they are ready to see to her monster, Madame leads them to area **10.** Should the PCs escape the cellar, she retires to room **29** to activate her machine. Once Madame has activated her machine, PCs entering the Grand Hall encounter the following:

> As you approach the exit, you hear a strange clicking and whirring. At the same time, armed warriors drop down from the balcony above. As they move toward you, their weapons weave a deadly net of steel in the dark air. Their faces seem frozen into hideous grins, and you notice that they move stiffly, if relentlessly, to the attack.

Warrior-puppets (8): MV 6; AC 10; HD 1–4 hp; hp 3 (×4), 2 (×3),1; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1–3; XP 7 (see Sidebar for other information); short sword (×2), dagger (×3), spear, hand axe, bastard sword.

Once their pattern has been learned the warrior-puppets here can be avoided. As described in the Sidebar, when the PCs first cause damage to a puppet, they discover the hideous nature of these creatures and must make a horror check.

Inside the curio are seven porcelain figurines of dancers worth 35 gp each. Besides being too cumbersome to be considered loot, the mirror is almost worthless, and the clock is non-functional.

> Jerretiere uses her *animate dead* ability to animate the warrior-puppets, recreating them into undead. Even if the PCs have already encountered and destroyed the puppets, the shattered parts are rejoined and rise as 1HD undead. If still attached to the machine, they break free of their wires before attacking.

Undead-puppets (8): INT non-; AL N; AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1–6; SD see below; MR nil; SZ M; ML special; XP 65; *MM*/315.

Undead are immune to *sleep, charm, hold,* and cold-based spells. They never check morale.

5. Closet. This small closet contains a few moldy old cloaks and a great quantity of spider webs. Renault Tuvache's old cane sword is propped in one corner (worth 50 gp because of the ornate ivory handle).

6. Hall of Trophies.

> The mounted skulls and horns of scores of dead beasts cover the walls. Skins and hides carpet the floor and adorn the walls. Running almost the entire length of the northern wall is the flayed and stretched hide of some enormous serpent. Beside the double doors in the east wall hangs a stunning shield made entirely of brilliant rainbow-hued feathers. But the dust and the yellowed bone and moth-eaten furs betray the former grandeur of this room; time dulls the horns and erases the glory of forgotten hunts.

The trophies are badly deteriorated and worthless.

PCs entering this area when the machine is running hear the sound of a piano and the scuffle and scrape of shoes coming from beyond the double doors which lead to area **11.**

> Jerretiere uses her *animate dead* ability to animate the trophy heads lining the walls. Although the heads have little value as attacking monsters, PCs witnessing the animated heads must make a horror check.

Undead trophy heads (12): INT 0; AL N; AC 8; MV 0; HD ½; hp 2 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1–2; MR nil; SZ S; ML special; XP 15.

The heads are attached to the walls and have little range of movement. They attack with horns, antlers, or teeth. They never check Morale. They are immune to *charm, sleep,* and cold-based spells.

7. Ladies' Lounge. A faded sign on the door to this room reads "Ladies Only." When Madame Tuvache started her dance academy, she had this room converted into a ladies' powder room. A peep hole in the western wall allowed the ladies to spy on their dance partners in area **11.** A giant mirror faces the entry door.

Jerretiere can communicate through the mirror in this room. Once per day, Madame Tuvache's face appears in the mirror to pronounce the doom of any intruders. For example, she might say to the PCs, "You thought it would be easy to destroy me, but now I am more powerful than you could ever dream!" Her face then fades from the glass as her laughter echoes through the house.

8. Gentlemen's Lounge. The faded sign on this door reads "Gentlemen." This was the original privy of the house, and became the Gentlemen's Lounge when Madame Tuvache opened her dance academy. A small window looks out at the front entry. The window is covered in heavy drapes.

This is the only room in the house where the PCs are completely safe from Jerretiere. Because the strict taboos of polite society are so deeply ingrained in her psyche, she cannot cross the boundaries of the Gentlemen's Lounge. She cannot hear anything said in this room and she cannot stop anyone from opening its small window and escaping the house.

9. The Library.

The smells of old leather and moldy parchment pervade this room, giving it an ancient, scholarly odor. The shelves lining the walls are filled with a treasure of old books and cracked parchment scrolls. Many of the books are supported by strange bookends, curios collected from countless places over many generations. There are skulls of beasts and men, large stones both shaped and unshaped; some are as black and misshapen as fallen stars; others seem to be pieces looted from ancient forgotten ruins. There are strange statuettes and idols, and exquisite potteries which could have been made only by a master.

In the center of the room, two high-backed leather chairs are arranged to take advantage of the large fireplace. A small clock ticks on the mantle, while a coal-fire burns on the hearth, lighting the room with a warm glow, but casting the corners into deepest shadow.

The objects hinted at in the boxed text only have value to the proper collector. None of these "collectibles" are worth more than 150 gp, and there are 8 such pieces in this room. The books cover a variety of subjects, but none are arcane or deal with forbidden or mystical subjects. The scrolls are various scholarly works: monographs on scientific or political subjects, the occasional love poem or letter, proper techniques for embalming, etc.

If the PCs investigate the clock on the mantel, they find a drawer beneath the clockface. In the drawer is a scroll with the 3rd-level priest spell *speak with dead.* Priest PCs can read this scroll with their standard chance of failure if they are not of a high enough level (see *DMG,* page 145); if the spell fails and a harmful or reverse effect is indicated, an *animate dead* spell is cast instead. The dead rises as a 3HD undead creature and attacks the priest. In any case, casting this spell requires a Powers check.

10. Servants' Hall. This narrow hall allows unobtrusive access to all social areas of the house. The spiral stairs lead up 20' to area **23,** while the cellar stairs lead down 30' to area **17.** A small door by the stairs opens into the library (area **9**), and the door at the top of the cellar stairs is usually locked. The door at the west end of the hall leads into room **11.**

11. The Grand Ballroom.

This large barren room is dominated by a huge painting hanging on the western wall below a large shrouded window. The painting is better than ten-feet long and almost as tall and it is framed in heavy, carved oak which has been painted gold. The painting depicts a boar hunt in the woods. Dogs maul the stricken beast while a dark, powerfully-built man riding a black war horse leans in to deal death with his sword. The artist has reproduced the man's maniacal grin to a frightening degree. Time has barely touched this painting, for it looks to have been tended with great care.

The window above the painting is also large but it, and the other windows, are hidden by heavy dark drapes and curtains. The ceiling is high but the shadows above hint at a strangely shaped ceiling. To the east is a balcony from which hangs a dark tapestry woven with abstract designs. Between the two windows in the south wall stands an old battered upright piano.

This room's marble floor has been worn into paths by the passing of many feet. The paths form concentric circles which cover the entire room, rather like the marks left on ice by the passing of skaters. Other than the double doors, the only other apparent exit is a small servants' door in the northeast corner.

The painting has little value; it exists only as a curiosity and a glimpse of Renault Tuvache. However, if moved to the right, a small lever is exposed. The lever causes the "dancing couples" (see below) to be raised while a single male puppet (Madame's dance partner) is lowered. The ceiling is more than 50' high; if it is illuminated, the PCs see the exposed machine — an intricate conglomeration of bronze and iron gears, wheels, rods, and pulleys, as well as 16 dancer-puppets (described below) dangling from their nearly-invisible wires. If an attempt is made to pull the piano away from the wall, the PCs find it firmly attached. They can move it just enough to glimpse a bronze rod protruding from the wall into the piano. This rod is attached to the machine and drives the piano's mechanism.

If the PCs enter the room while the machine is in operation, read the following:

The hall is flooded with the sound of a summer waltz. The dancers seem to take no notice of you. A stiff-backed figure dressed in a military uniform sits at a piano, playing for the dozen or more dancers circling the floor in a whirling phantasm of faded finery and cracked, peeling faces. It is a grand ball, with ladies dressed in the highest fashion of a bygone day and men in their best military dress, but the hands that clasp so eagerly are crudely sewn together by copper wires, the smiling faces are broken and shattered like porcelain masks, revealing naked yellow bone beneath, and the beautiful gowns and sharp military regalia hang sadly on bodies that should have long ago been laid in their graves.

Sixteen dancer-puppets keep time to the mad schemes of Madame Tuvache. PCs should make a horror check at this point, as these preserved human corpses have begun to break apart and flake, revealing bone. If the PCs have already experienced the scene in the Dining Room (area **26**) or have battled

any warrior-puppets, allow a +2 bonus to their horror checks. The dancers have no attack value; any hit destroys them. The corpse at the piano is not really playing; the piano plays itself while the corpse mimics the movements of playing.

12. Tea Room.

This is perhaps the sunniest room in the house. No draperies or curtains hide the door in the east wall. The door is made of yellow glass, allowing plenty of amber light to filter into this room, but heavy iron bars prevent anyone from smashing the glass and entering the house. The door leads outside onto a raised wooden deck. The room is furnished as a tea or breakfast room, with a small round table surrounded by four wooden chairs. Dust coats the table like a fine gray linen.

In the northwest corner of the room, there is a small chest made of fine cedar with bronze fittings. The chest contains a silver tea set, but it is heavily tarnished. Cleaned, the set is worth 150 gp. The exit door is locked and trapped at all times. The trap breaks a tiny vial of poison that spills upon the lockpicker's hands unless a save vs. breath weapon is made (poison type M, contact).

Jerretiere is able to spray the poison from the trapped lock on the door. Any PC who moves within 5' of the door must make a save vs. breath weapon to avoid being hit by the spraying poison. Those who fail suffer the consequences described above. The poison can be sprayed only once.

13. Graves' Room.

The door sticks somewhat, but opens with a shove. Within, you see a small bedroom that looks to have been recently occupied. Its floor is swept, and the corners are free of cobwebs. The only articles of furniture are a simple wood-frame bed and a chair, over which is draped a black jacket neatly brushed but frayed at the cuffs and worn thin at the elbows. On the wall above the chair are some peculiar brown stains running down from the ceiling.

The brown stains are from blood that seeped through the floor from area **30** above, while corpses were being readied for the preservation vat.

This small bedroom, once reserved for minor guests, is now the residence of Madame's loyal servant Graves. During the day, Graves is always with Madame Tuvache or somewhere near at hand. However, late at night he can be found asleep in this room, and at dusk and dawn he tends the horses in the carriage house. Therefore, Graves is not placed in any specific room and should be allowed to sneak about the house keeping an eye on the PCs. The DM might allow the PCs the chance to catch him before they have a final encounter with Madame and so learn her tragic history, or the PCs might not find Graves until after Madame is destroyed or caught, in which case he willingly tells them of her tragic descent into madness.

Graves: AL LN; AC 10; MV 9; 0-level human male; 4 hp; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; S 10, D 9, C 13, I 14, W 11, Ch 9; ML 13; XP 7.

If threatened, Graves begs for mercy. He attacks only if the life of Madame Tuvache is threatened, and then he uses any weapon at hand. He does not have any treasure. Graves keeps a massive ring containing keys for every door lock in the house, including exit doors.

Graves knows the full history of Madame. Graves is not a thoroughly evil man, but in the service of his mistress he has committed severe crimes against humanity. He is deeply sorry for his crimes and would like to stop, but as long as Madame continues, so will he.

Graves no longer wishes to serve his Mistress after she becomes Jerretiere. He does not understand this strange transformation. Although he has been a loyal servant for many years, Jerretiere is not averse to killing Graves should he try to help the PCs escape. However, given time he agrees to do her bidding, luring new victims to the house for Madame to torment and slay.

14. The Master's Bedroom. The door to this room is locked.

More than any other room in the house, this room is stiflingly close, as if it has not been opened in a hundred years. The heavy door groans on its hinges, stirring up clouds of dust and a cloying, sepulchral odor.

Once the dust settles, you see a man's bedchamber. The furnishings are spartan, heavy, serviceable, but exceedingly old, caked with dust and shrouded with spider webs. The room is designed rather like a hunting camp, with the large canopied bed serving as a tent, and canvas-backed chairs arranged in a circle around a low table upon which still lay, beneath a blanket of dust, a deck of playing cards. In the southeast corner stands a rack of weapons and a manikin supporting a suit of plate mail armor, while the shadows of the southwest corner hide a small camp desk and folding stool.

The cards are ordinary, their faces faded by time. The weapons are all of the hunting variety, including spears, javelins, a long bow and quiver with 12 fowling arrows (damage 1–2/1), and a boar sword (treat as a two-handed sword) depicted in the painting in the Grand Ballroom. All of the weapons are in terrible shape and must be worked by a weaponsmith before being used (wooden shafts snap at first use, metal blades are rusty and dull). The armor is similarly deteriorated; it needs work by an armorer at a cost of 1,000 gp before it can safely be worn (joints stick, belts and fastens break). The camp desk contains nothing of interest.

If the PCs investigate the canopy bed, they find its skeletal occupant. Here lies Renault Tuvache, still wearing his rotted pajamas, still lying where he died in agony from the poison administered by his wife, Madame Tuvache. If they use the *speak with dead* spell scroll found in the library, Renault tells of his untimely and ultimate demise at the hands of his wife. He also warns the PCs against harming Madame Tuvache, saying that she cannot truly be slain. He warns that, should she die, Araby will become a creature of terrible power and evil.

15. Guest Bedroom.

The rank air that exudes like a foul breath upon the opening of the door is musty and choked with clouds of dust. It is some time before you can enter.

Inside is evidence of a terrible crime. On a small table beside the unmade bed, you see a crystal goblet, its sides stained dark brown by some old liquid, and spiderwebs connect it in a solid mass to the bottle beside it.

The entire wall beside the bed is covered by a huge splattered, brown stain. The sheets of the bed are also stained, as is the dusty carpet. In one

corner of the room stands a small round table and two chairs. On the table sits a tarnished silver platter heaped with old bones. The bones are human, and they look well gnawed.

The bones are the remains of the woman devoured during Renault Tuvache's last party. Although she was slain in the Grand Ballroom, she was eaten here. Because of the violence and horror of her death, the woman's geist still inhabits this room. As a general rule, the geist makes herself visible to only one of the PCs, usually the one who makes the most thorough search of the room. The DM should either take the chosen player aside or slip him a note with the following description:

As you bend down and look under the bed, you are shocked to discover a woman's head; her long brown hair flows about her bloody severed head, and even more horrible, her eyes are open wide and her mouth gapes as if she wishes to speak.

The PC must make a save vs. fear or flee the room. Likewise, a horror check is in order. But even more disturbing, the other PCs cannot see the geist. When they look under the bed they see only cobwebs and dust kittens.

Geist: INT average; AL N; AC 10; MV fly 12; HD nil; hp nil; THAC0 nil; #AT none; Dmg none; SA sight causes panic; SD invulnerable; MR 100%; SZ M; ML fearless; XP 0; *Ravenloft Monstrous Compendium Appendix III*/45.

16. Guest Bedroom.

The cold hearth and dank, odorous ashes speak of the years that have passed since anyone spent an evening in this bedroom. The lush carpet has faded, the rich furniture grown gray with the gathering dust. The window here, like the others in the house, is heavily shrouded by dark curtains.

An empty crystal decanter sits atop the heavy oak desk in a corner by the fireplace. The blankets on the bed have been turned back, revealing time-yellowed sheets.

The PCs may notice a large dark stain on the carpet beside the bed where something was recently spilled. Those with acute senses of smell instantly recognize the stain as red wine. Of even greater interest, an empty wine bottle may be found where it rolled under the bed. An adventurer foolishly drank poisoned wine given to him by Madame, dropped the bottle and spilled its contents, then died beside the bed. Underneath the desk, the PCs may find his scroll of *protection against poison*, which he tried and failed to read before he died. Madame missed the scroll when she came to collect the body.

The crystal decanter is worth 65 gp. A careful examination of the fireplace reveals that the chimney was bricked up some years ago. Any attempt to build a fire in the fireplace fills the room with smoke.

The Basement

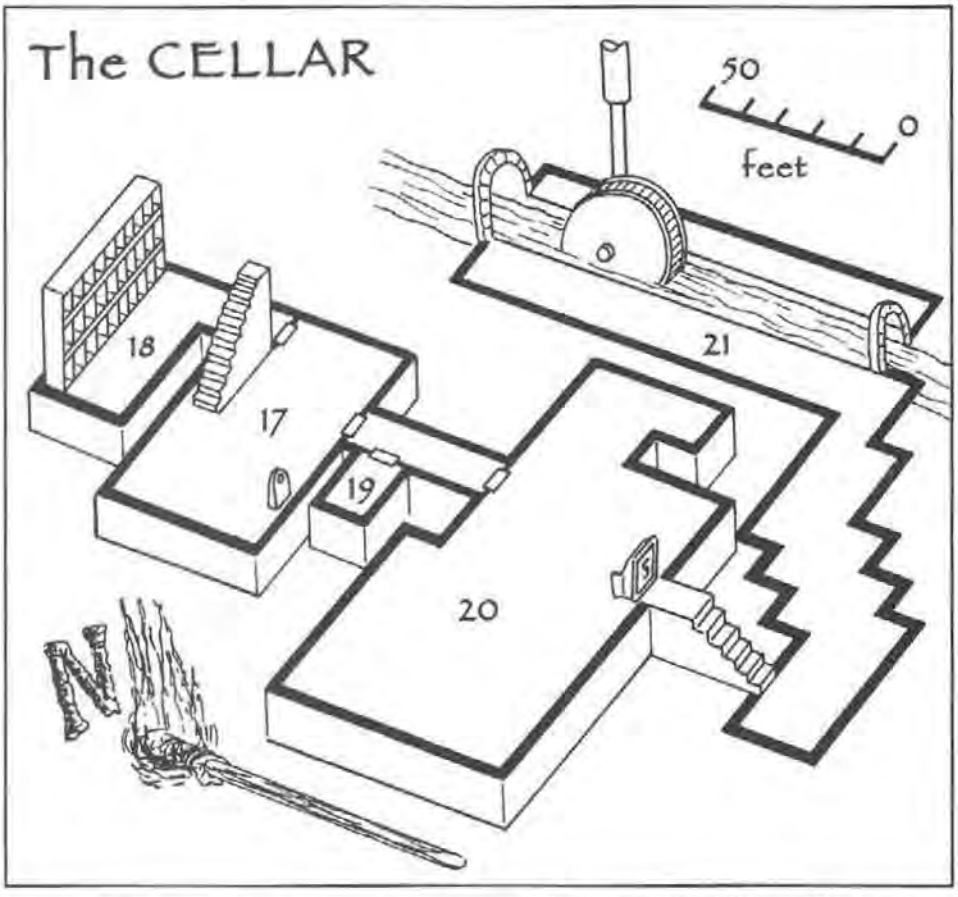
17. Cellar. Careful time should be kept from the moment the PCs enter this room:

The steep steps are slick with moisture, and water seeps from between the stones of the walls. Pools of water have collected on the uneven stone floor. Except for a storage cabinet standing against the south wall, this section of the basement appears empty.

Both doors in this room are locked, as is the door at the top of the stairs (Madame silently locks it behind the PCs). The PCs quickly discover that they are trapped, and their loudest calls receive no answer. The doors can be opened with a successful Open Doors roll, or they can be bashed or hacked open with weapons.

If the PCs stop and listen, they hear a ticking noise coming from a cabinet standing against the south wall. Inside the cabinet is a time bomb built by Madame, but the PCs may not immediately recognize its danger (a Wisdom or Intelligence check reveals the nature of the device, but not necessarily how to defuse it). The mechanism is a quaint old clock. No matter what time it really is, when the PCs first enter this room the clock reads five minutes to midnight; thereafter they have five rounds to discover the bomb and stop it.

Read the following when the players open the cabinet:



Inside the cabinet, you discover a strange old clock. The time reads a few minutes before midnight. To one side of the clock face, there is a glass ball filled with some sort of blue liquid. A small track leads away from the ball and around the base of the clock to a tiny figure of a dwarf holding a hammer.

When midnight strikes, the tiny dwarf slides around the track to the glass ball. He rings out the time on the ball with his hammer. Unless the PCs stop him, on the seventh strike, the glass ball shatters, spilling the liquid which quickly forms a poisonous cloud of gas, entirely filling the room in two rounds. The poison is deadly, and the PCs must save vs. poison or die. If the PCs make their saving throws, they still suffer 2–20 hp damage per round spent in the cloud. The glass ball cannot be removed without breaking it, but if a soft surface (such as a finger) is placed between it and the dwarf's hammer, it does not shatter. The clock could also be turned back to delay the time bomb.

The poison cloud lingers for 1 turn before dissipating. The cloud also fills areas **18** and **19.** In area **20** it covers the floor to a depth of only a few inches. Unless the PCs actually get down on the floor and sniff it, they suffer no harm. On the other hand, the rats in room **20** run in terror as soon as the poisonous gas enters the room. A few of them are caught within the cloud and die, allowing the PCs to discover the nature of the gas.

If the PCs do not discover the bomb within five rounds, read or paraphrase the following:

You hear a strange rhythmic clinking noise coming from the cabinet standing against the south wall. Suddenly, something shatters, and a cloud of blue gas pours through the cracks of the cabinet.

Madame Tuvache waits for one hour before checking on the PCs. If she hears nothing, she unlocks the door and waits another half hour before descending the stairs accompanied by Graves.

18. Wine Cellar.

The north wall of this room is dominated by a huge wine rack, but most of its slots have long been empty. Now, centipedes rule the dark recesses meant to hold precious bottles of wine, while woodworms have turned many of the shelves into fragile lace-like sculptures barely able to support the dust coating them. Only a few old bottles remain, their labels obscured by thick layers spider webs. At the foot of the wine rack sits a small chest with a tiny silver lock; rats have chewed a hole through its wooden side.

There are three bottles of wine. One is ruined and worthless, the other two are worth 75 gp and 90 gp. The small chest contains an old rat's nest and two intact crystal goblets (among a heap of shattered ones) worth 20 gp each. Each goblet is etched with the Tuvache family crest. The silver lock is worth 15 gp.

19. Closet. This was once nothing more than a utility closet, but Madame began using it as a storage place for items she removed from her past victims that were too heavy or bulky to carry upstairs. The PCs find a suit of scale mail, two long swords, one battle axe, one footman's mace, and two shields (one is a *shield +1*). There is also a quantity of partially used torches, a brass lantern half-filled with oil, and a grappling hook with a length of rope attached to it.

20. Rat's Lair.

This room is a monument to decay. Great casks of grain and other commodities once lined the walls, but they have long since split and spilled their contents, or else were bored into by industrious rats. At the east end of the room lies a heap of old furniture, rotten to a point of uselessness.

Against the south wall stands a weather-beaten cupboard. One of its doors hangs by a single bent hinge. As you enter the room, you hear the sound of scurrying feet, probably rats. You see their red beady eyes peering at you from the dark corners and their shadows seem uncommonly large.

It only takes a moment for the PCs to discover the reason for this trick of the light.

Giant rats (5): INT semi-; AL NE; AC 7; MV 12, swim 6; HD ½; hp 4, 3 (×2), 2 (×2); THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg

1-3; SA disease; MR nil; SZ T (2' long); ML 7; XP 15; *MM*/300.

Wharf rats (pack): INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 15, swim 3; HD 4; hp 26; THAC0 n/a (see below); #AT n/a (see below); SA disease; MR nil; SZ M–L (see below); ML 4; XP 175; *MM*/300.

This pack of wharf rats (led by the giant rats), is bolder than most and attacks up to four PCs. They are attracted here because of the discarded human remains which Madame Tuvache occasionally dumps into the underground canal (area **21**). All rats fear fire and may be driven off by it, but if backed into a corner they attack with renewed ferocity. A rat bite has a 5% chance of causing a debilitative disease unless the victim makes a save vs. poison.

A pack of wharf rats attacks like a single entity rather than a group of individual monsters, therefore the somewhat inflated statistics given above. It is assumed that this pack can cover a 10' × 10' area, automatically inflicting 4 hp damage per round to anyone caught within their area of effect. Up to two victims may be included in this area, but the rats have the option of dividing into two groups, halving all attack, hit, and hit point values. Weapons have little effect on a pack of rats (1 hp damage per hit), but area of effect attacks (flaming oil, certain spells) cause normal damage. When a pack's hp are reduced to 0, it is assumed that the pack is dispersed and unable to continue the attack (with an appropriate number of dead rats left behind). The wharf rats attack the smallest members of the party while the giant rats take on the bigger PCs.

If the rats are driven off, some of them flee through the cupboard door (mentioned in boxed text). Behind the cupboard is a secret door which leads to area **21** below.

> The cupboard slides back, revealing a dark staircase leading into impenetrable darkness. You hear the sound of rushing water below.

If the room is thoroughly searched, the PCs find 22 gp in copper and silver coins, semiprecious stones, silver buttons, and the like.

21. Canal Landing. It is assumed in the following boxed text that the PCs have yet to experience the horrors of Madame Tuvache's machine. If they have, then it should not be too hard to guess that the water wheel powers the puppet-works.

> These stairs are much less steep than those leading to the cellar. These were obviously built at a different time than the house, but you cannot tell whether it was before or after. In any case, you soon reach the bottom, where a you find a broad landing of cobblestones.
>
> There is an underground canal here, but from Madame Tuvache's story, you had expected this. She did not tell you about the water wheel attached to the wall of the canal. The wheel turns a stout iron shaft which vanishes into a small pipe in the ceiling. The shaft leads up to the house.

The PCs are free to explore the canal, but without a boat or canoe, such an action could prove more dangerous than Madame Tuvache's house. The DM should feel free to fill the canals with large crocodiles, hordes of rats, and other nasty creatures, but these underground waterways are not detailed in this adventure.

A few stout blows of an axe damages the water wheel enough to prevent the machine from working. Likewise, a spear or other object could be used to jam it.

> Jerretiere uses her *summon swarm* ability to summon a horde of wharf rats to attack any PCs here. The rats swim in through the canal.

Second Floor

DM Note: When the machine is running, PCs can hear the piano in room **11** while in areas **22–27,** because of the open balcony.

22. Landing. The stairs lead down 20' to area **4;** the balcony overlooks the same area. There is nothing else of interest here unless the machine is in operation, in which case four warrior-puppets (see statistics on page 54) guard this area. If any PCs lean on either the balcony or stair railing, the wood must save vs. crushing blow (due to its age and poor condition) or break, dropping the PC to the floor below.

> Jerretiere uses her *animate dead* ability to animate the warrior-puppets (see statistics on page 54), turning them into normal undead. Even if the PCs have already encountered and destroyed the puppets, the scattered parts are rejoined and rise up as 1HD undead.

23. The Kitchen.

> Unlike many other rooms in this house, the kitchen has not been abandoned to the ravages of time. The knives and other utensils are clean and polished, the plates neatly stacked in the cupboard, the butcher table scrubbed to a hazy glow despite its many nicks and cuts. Although no fire burns in the fireplace, the room is warm.

24. Servants' Quarters.

> This hall leads to the servants' quarters. All but one of the four doors lining the hall stands ajar. Through the open doorway of the nearest room, you see a simple bed, table, and chair. Judging by the thickness of the dust, it has been some time since anyone has visited this room.

Two other doors in this hall stand ajar as well, and open into rooms identical to the one described above. The fourth door and its room are described below.

24a. The Fourth Door.

> Unlike the other three doors in this hall, this door is closed. The door handle has been broken off, and the door's facing has been badly gouged and scratched as if someone has tried to pry it open. The broad steel head of a crossbow bolt is sticking through the door, as though fired from behind the door at close range. You also find an iron pry bar lying on the floor here.

The door is nailed shut from within; an Open Doors roll with a –2 penalty opens it; it can also be hacked and smashed open with weapons, or it can be opened magically. Whoever opens the door must immediately save vs. breath weapon or take 1d4 hp damage from the crossbow trap protecting the door. Once the door is open and the trap sprung, read or paraphrase the following:

This room is identical in many respects to the other servant's quarters. However, directly in front of the door is a sprung crossbow strapped to a wooden chair. A thin thread connects the weapon's trigger to the door. On the floor by the bed is an empty water flask and a few stale crumbs of bread, while on the bed lies a pitiful, emaciated corpse. She might have been beautiful once, but now her cheekbones protrude hideously beneath her pale blue flesh. She wears ring mail armor and a fine warhammer lies next to her in the bed. Judging by the sickening odor of her rotting flesh, she hasn't been dead very long.

This former adventurer escaped from Madame's basement, but when she began to explore the house in search of the villain who had tried to kill her, she nearly lost her mind from all the horrors she encountered. At last, she took refuge in this small room and nailed the door shut. When Madame and Graves came prying at the door, the weakening warrior fired her crossbow at the closed door to drive them away. She then set the crossbow trap should they return while she slept. Too terrified to venture forth from what would be her tomb, she lingered for weeks, eventually dying of thirst and hunger.

She has 20 gp, 35 sp, and a periapt of *proof against poison +1* (amethyst) in a pouch at her belt.

25. Cloak Room.

This small closet is packed with clothes of all colors, designs, and sizes, boots beyond naming, and cloaks beyond counting stacked up like blankets on a trader's post shelf.

This room is usually locked. This is where Madame tosses items (for which she has no use) taken from her past victims. Among the more common cloaks, boots, clothing, and torches is a *short sword +1* (unless it has been already been removed, see area **4**).

26. Dining Room. Unless the machine is in operation, this room contains only a long table surrounded by high-backed chairs. But if the machine is running, read or paraphrase the following:

You have come upon a formal dining room, but now, only a strange parody of feasting is held here. The ten seats are occupied by formally dressed mannequins whose motions mimic those of people enjoying a fine dinner. Some appear to sip soup, while others mimic slicing food. The only sound is a horrible clicking and creaking. Looking closer, you notice that some of the faces of the mannequins have cracked and are peeling away, revealing beneath what looks to be naked human bone, yellowed with age.

PCs should make a horror check at this point. If they have already experienced the scene in the Grand Ballroom, allow a +2 bonus to their horror checks. The puppets have no attack values; any hit destroys them.

27. The Balcony. Anyone falling over the railing drops 20' to the floor of the Grand Ballroom (area **11**) below. If the machine is in operation, PCs see the thin strong wires which support the puppets dancing below. If the PCs have yet to visit the Grand Ballroom, paraphrase the descriptions given at area **11**. PCs should make a horror check when first viewing the dance of the puppets. If they have previously visited the Dining Room, allow a +2 bonus to their horror checks.

28. The Gauntlet. This hall is ordinary in most respects. However, whenever the machine is running the spears can be made to jab down from the ceiling. The spears descend from the ceiling slowly at first before rapidly gaining speed. Allow the PCs one round to react before they start suffering damage. The spears cover every square foot of the hall (running north and south), and the doors at the ends of the hall shut and lock before the spears descend. The jabbing of the spears is purely mechanical, based upon a pattern that cannot be changed, therefore rather than rolling to hit, every PC must save vs. breath weapon each round spent in the hall or suffer 1d6 hp damage (save for half damage). Unlike the puppets, there are too many spears for the PCs to unravel their pattern and avoid being hit. A good time for this trap to be sprung is when the PCs are trying to enter area **29.**

Jerretiere's great Strength allows her to shut the doors even if they have been propped open, and she can lock all four doors to prevent the PCs' escape (see "The Nightmare Has Only Begun"). At the same time, her control of the spears is based upon a directed attack rather than a mechanical pattern, therefore every PC must save vs. breath weapon each round spent in the hall or suffer 2d6 hp damage (save for half damage).

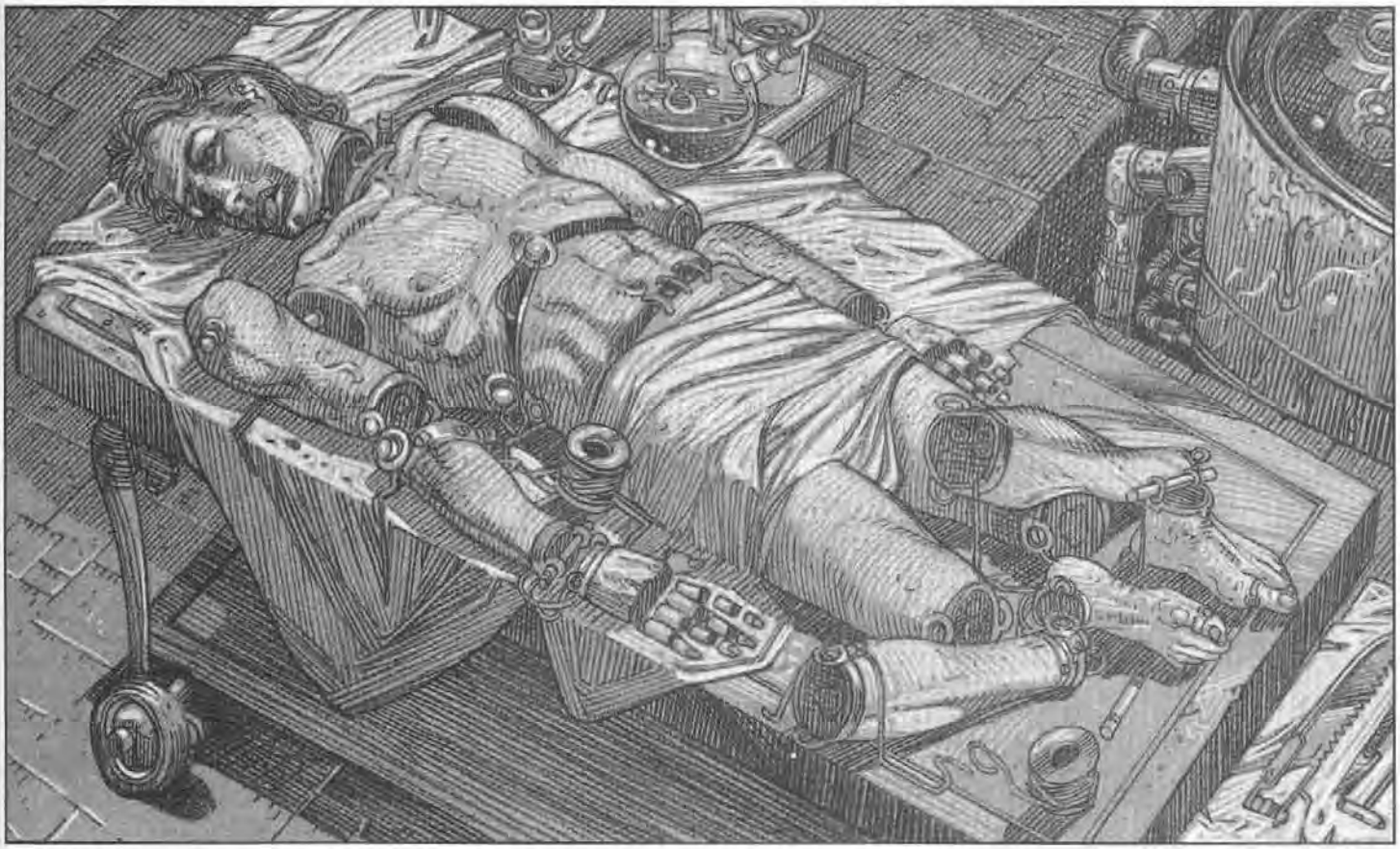
29. The Control Room. This door is locked. Read the following:

This room is the heart of the house; here is where everything is controlled. On the north wall is a vast array of switches, bells, and levers, the complexity of which is beyond imagining. Only a small bed provides any comfort for the occupant of this room, but the room is well stocked with bread, wine, and water, as if in preparation for a siege. Overhead, all sorts of wheels, gears, and gizmos turn endlessly, churning up a mind-numbing mechanical drone.

As described, every mechanical action of the house is controlled from this room. Here, the puppets can be made to dance in the Grand Ballroom, and here is where Madame Tuvache makes her last stand. She has stocked the room with food and drink to last her for three days should the PCs prove difficult.

The house is powered by a water wheel in the basement. This is attached to a shaft which runs up to the attic (shaft is visible on the maps, beside the staircase leading from area **4** to **22**). The shaft and water wheel are also the Achilles heel of the house; if one of these is destroyed, the house ceases to function. A total of 200 hp physical damage must be delivered to the mechanism of the house before it malfunctions (this does not apply to the water wheel, which can be destroyed by a few blows from an axe).

This room also provides the only access to the attic, by way of a spiral staircase. In all other parts of the house, the meshing of gears and wheels is too thick for anyone to pass through. If it seems that the PCs are about to get into this room, Madame reluctantly retreats up the stairs to the attic and hides among the clothes in the Storage Room (area **35**).



30. Preservation and Rejuvenation Room. The door is not locked, so the PCs can dive in here to escape the spears at area **28.**

> A charnel house smell combined with the scent of powerful chemicals pervades the air here. An attempt has been made to cover the smell with perfumes, but this only intensifies the sickening odor.
>
> To your left is a long table upon which lies a human corpse. The poor man looks like he was about forty when he died. He has been dismembered, cut apart at every joint. His eyes are open and his black tongue protrudes from between his clenched teeth. Behind the table, set against the wall, is a cabinet .
>
> The north side of the room is dominated by a large tub filled with some vile chemical. It bubbles and reeks continuously, rolling like water set to boil, but without any fire to heat it. Large solid objects roll in the murky liquid.

The tub of chemicals is used for preserving the dismembered corpses. The PCs can safely touch the chemicals for short periods of time (less than one round); however, prolonged unprotected exposure acts as a weak contact poison (onset 2 rounds; 1–4/0) until washed away. If the PCs attempt to fish one of the "solid objects" from the tub, they discover more dismembered human remains. If any PCs are killed during the adventure and the surviving PCs escape without stopping Madame Tuvache and then return at a later date, they might find some parts of their friends in the tub.

If the PCs look beneath the table they find a carpenter's box containing an assortment of tools similar to those used by veterinarians. The corpse has a gold tooth worth 15 gp (if the PCs are truly sick and desperate for money). The PCs may also investigate a cupboard hanging from the west wall. This cupboard contains an assortment of pickled treasures from Madame's former victims, small mementos to remind her of past victories. In glass jars of murky liquid (which must be shaken to reveal their contents) are three eyeballs, a nose, an ear, and two fingers. There are also four porcelain vials of poison, types C, H, L, and O.

The cabinet contains several pairs of rubber gloves and a rubber apron. There is also a bucket and a mop; the bucket is filled with water which can be used to clean the preserving chemicals from exposed flesh.

> Jerretiere uses her *animate dead* ability to create zombies from the two corpses (on the table and in the tub) in this room. The magic of the animation knits together the separate parts of the corpses to form them into complete zombies. The zombies attack anyone entering this room.

Zombies (2): INT non-; AL N; AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 12 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1–8; SD see below; MR nil; SZ M; ML special; XP 65; *MM*/373.

Zombies are immune to *sleep, charm, hold,* and cold-based spells. They always attack last in the round, and they attack until destroyed or turned.

31. Marble Hall.

The floor here is made of polished white marble. The southern wall is painted to resemble a classical temple lined with marble columns. At either end of the hall stand fine statues, one of a man, the other of a woman. Both wear simple tunics and carry shepherds' crooks. Behind each statue is a window shrouded in dark somber cloth.

Jerretiere is able to use her *animate object* ability on one of the statues. Once animated, the statue attacks for 12 rounds (spell's duration) or until it suffers enough damage to reduce it to rubble.

Animated statue: INT non-; AL N; AC 2; MV 6; HD 4+8; hp 40; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 3–18; MR nil; SZ M; ML special; XP 270.

32. Madame's Boudoir.

This bedroom obviously belongs to the Mistress of the house, as is evident by the richness of the furniture and the lack of dust and spider webs. But despite the frilly pink laces, dust covers, and profusion of interesting knickknacks, brushes, and combs, nothing can dispel the overwhelming horror and madness of this room. In every corner is propped a rigid human corpse, smartly dressed but smiling hideously. It appears that some have been dressed to resemble the portraits which decorate the walls.

This bedroom was once reserved for important guests, and some of their paintings adorn the walls. Among the other less-noteworthy portraits hangs a dark depiction of Marie Renier, deceased mother of Jacqueline Renier, lord of Richemulot. When Araby married Renault Tuvache, she took this room as her own. The brushes are made of ivory and worth 75 gp as a set. There is also a silver hand-mirror worth 55 gp. This room has its own small library, but none of the books deal with arcane subjects of interest to PC wizards or priests. On one shelf is Madame's beloved book about clockmaking, and an examination of it reveals her technical notes scrawled in the margin. Unlike the fireplace in room **16,** a fire can safely be built here to warm the room. The chimney was bricked up below this level.

33. Children's Room.

Toys lay scattered across the floor of this room, dusty blocks and dark-eyed dolls give silent testimony to the sanity and life which once thrived in this house. The southern wall has been fancifully painted with dragons and knights, and the short but richly-carved canopy bed was never meant to hold an adult. Behind the bed, and partially hidden by its drapes, is a child's drawing scrawled upon the wall of a stick man being beheaded.

This was Renault Tuvache's room when he was a child, and Araby had hoped to use it for her children as well. The gruesome picture described above was drawn by Renault when he was 10 years old, after he witnessed an execution. Renault would not let anyone erase his drawing, for it served as a reminder of what happens to those who are weak.

The Attic & Clock Tower

34. The Attic Walkway. The attic is accessed by way of the spiral staircase in room **29.** The stairs let onto a low walkway surrounded entirely by clockwork machinery. Only the narrow spaces indicated on the map are open enough to allow anyone to travel freely. Any attempt at movement within the machinery is extremely slow (MV 1) when the machine is stopped, and impossible when the machine is running. If melee takes place in the attic walkways while the machine is running, Dexterity checks must be made every round to avoid stumbling into the machinery. Anyone who falls into, or is caught in the machinery while it is running, must save vs. death magic every round or be crushed to death. Even if the save is made, the PC automatically suffers 5–20 hp damage.

Peep holes have been drilled into the floor in most areas of the walkways, allowing Madame and Graves to keep track of the PCs' progress on the second floor. The PCs have the same chance to notice the peep holes as if noticing concealed doors.

Jerretiere attacks anyone passing through this area. The gears, bars, and rods swing out to smash intruders for 1d12 hp damage.

35. Storage Room.

This room is filled with racks and racks of moldy old clothes. Although they must have once been the latest fashions, they have long since fallen out of style and been devoured by moths. So extensive is this collection of clothes that you cannot see anything except what is directly ahead and above.

This room is directly beneath the clock. As you look up, you see the clockwork mechanism high above you, where a long brass pendulum swings ponderously over your heads. There is a ladder in the northeast corner of the room leading up to a platform surrounding the clockwork mechanism.

As stated, visibility is limited to what is directly ahead and above the PCs, unless they make an effort to part the clothes hanging on the racks and peer into other aisles. A round window in the southern wall allows a small amount of light into the room, but it is too small for adult human PCs to pass through. Only a child or a halfling could use this as an escape hatch, but the window could be opened so that the PCs can scream for help, not that anyone would hear. If Madame Tuvache is driven from room **29,** she takes refuge here. If the PCs climb up to area **36** without finding her, she sneaks out and locks the door, trapping them in the clock tower.

36. Clock Platform. This narrow wooden platform completely surrounds the clockwork mechanism, allowing access for repair and cleaning. The platform is 20' above room **35.** The clock operates independently from the house; it is not powered by the water wheel in the basement. In the southeast and northwest corners hang the large brass weights which drive the mechanism of the clock; each one weighs over 200 lbs. and would crash through all floors if the chain were somehow broken. The ladder continues up 20' to The Belfry.

Jerretiere uses her *summon swarm* ability to summon a cloud of bats to attack PCs entering this area. The bats confuse and blind the PCs, forcing them to make a Dexterity check to avoid falling off the platform or the ladder.

37. The Belfry.

Your entrance onto this platform disturbs the small rookery infesting this belfry.The birds erupt in a squawking cloud of black feathers, momentarily blinding you. As the birds pour out of the belfry, you see the large iron bell which tolls the hours, suspended from a beam in the roof. A gear connected to the clock below turns a crank which rings the bell.

From the height of the belfry you see the city spread out below you, and the silver ribbon of the river winding into the distance.

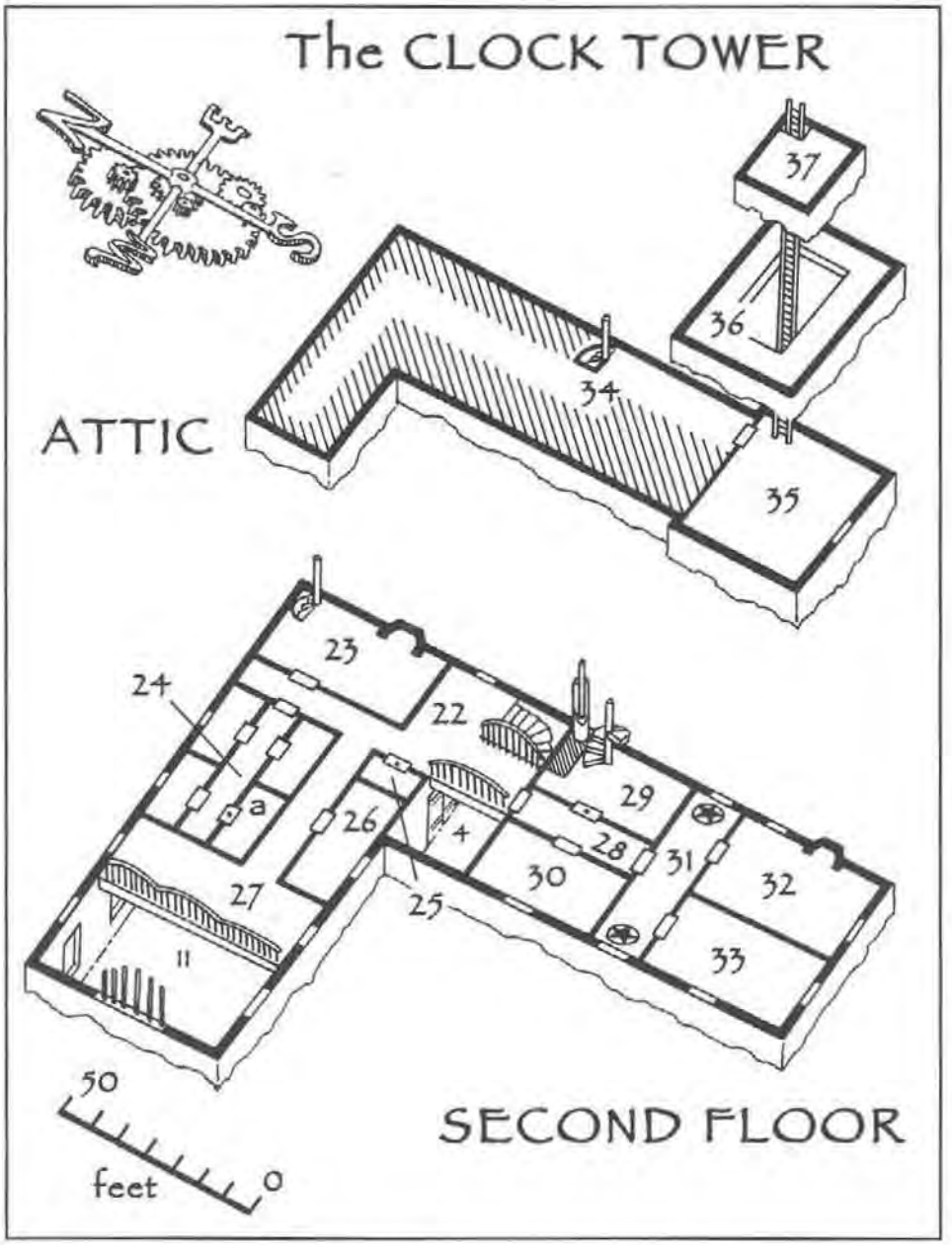
Anyone inside the belfry when the bell tolls must save vs. death magic or be deafened for 1d6 turns.

Concluding the Adventure

The purpose of the adventure is to escape Madame's mad trap. When the PCs have done this, the adventure is ended (for the moment). If the PCs defeat Madame Tuvache and capture her, she appears harmless but then suddenly lashes out with her poisoned dagger. She has come to believe that her death will only make her more powerful. She is correct (see "The Nightmare Has Only Begun").

It is unlikely that the PCs can slay Jerretiere the Greater Animator. They can drive the spirit out by destroying the house but to actually destroy the spirit requires the use of spells too powerful for a party of this level. Award surviving PCs half value XPs for Jerretiere if they destroy the house to drive her spirit out; also award 500 XPs over and above normal awards for monsters defeated and exceptional play.

The PCs may take (without consequence) any items of value from the house, but if they go around trying to sell poisons, they might attract unwanted attention. If word of the powers of silver-mercurium reaches Jacqueline Renier, the PCs could very well come to the attention of the Lord of Richemulot. She may wish to "acquire a sample" of this virulent poison, as well as find out where the PCs purchased it. As can be imagined, the discovery of a poison especially toxic to lycanthropes would be cause for her concern. Of even greater concern is the appearance of a powerful new evil force in Richemulot. Jacqueline Renier may approach the PCs about destroying this new evil, since they were the ones who released it. Jerretiere continues to grow in power after the adventure unless her spirit is driven from the estate or the house is destroyed. She uses Graves to lure new victims to the estate, or if he was slain, she rings the clock tower bell at odd times to attract the bold and curious. If the house is destroyed, Jerretiere is driven from the estate. She assumes the role of a Greater Animator and leaves the area in search of abused wives or discontented girls to "protect" and to feed upon. Ω



THE MAD CHEFS OF LAC ANCHOIS

BY JENNIFER TITTLE STACK

Bon appetit

Artwork by Tom Baxa
Cartography by Michael Scott

Jennifer writes: This adventure is dedicated to my husband, Joe, who is a much better cook than any of the characters in this module.

"The Mad Chefs of Lac Anchois" is an AD&D® adventure for 3–6 PCs of levels 6–9 (about 40 total levels). The PCs must be of good or neutral alignment. The adventure begins in a forest near a small town.

Adventure Background

The sleepy hamlet of Lac Anchois is famous for culinary delights. Many famous chefs were born in this region, and tourists travel from far-away places to sample the local delicacies. The newest restaurant in the area is the expensive Chez Grands Frères, run by two hot-tempered giant brothers, Pol and Prue Dhomme (their given names are Poularde and Pruneaux, respectively).

The brothers felt that their culinary expertise was not respected in the cloud giant community so they decided to build their restaurant on the edge of a human settlement. The other cloud giants believed that the brothers' excessive interest in cooking was an inferior, hill giantish trait, unbefitting cloud giants (rumors spread that hill giants existed somewhere in the brothers' ancestry). The brothers disliked this treatment and set off to build a magnificent restaurant in a place where good cooking was appreciated.

A committee of famous giantish food critics and chefs are visiting Chez Grands Frères to sample the food and to award the appropriate number of gold stars. The brothers are extremely excited about the visit. They consider the critics' dinner to be the culminating moment of their careers, their chance to win the respect of their fellow giants. After choosing the main course of frog legs fricasseed in walnut oil with braised carrots and artichoke hearts, the brothers set off into the nearby woods and gathered the perfect frogs. Unfortunately, (for their prey) what they captured were not ordinary frogs, but ten young grippli — small frog-like humanoids. The grippli youngsters were out foraging for insects when the giants grabbed them up and stuffed them into canvas bags without bothering to listen to the their desperate pleas (the giants mistook the creature's high pitched cries for ordinary frog calls).

Two of the frog-people escaped to the tribe to tell their harrowing story. After studying the scene of the crime (the evidence consisting of two sets of huge footprints, a giant chef's hat lost in the struggle, and dollop of hollandaise sauce), a few resourceful grippli scouts tracked the perpetrators back to their home. A small group of grippli now keep watch on the restaurant at all times.

Krshiklla, the grippli tribe mother, is in a frenzy over the kidnappings. She learns of adventurers traversing the woods and appeals to them for help. If they agree to help, the PCs have 72 hours to liberate the grippli before the brothers prepare the main course of their special dinner. Krshiklla does not know the actual deadline, but she guesses from the giants frenzied preparations that the time is soon. There is an inn at Lac Anchois, or the party can camp near the edge of the woods (since it is not crucial to the adventure, the inn is not described; see the Scout's Camp section later for the camp's description), or they may stay hidden in the restaurant until they manage to free the grippli. This is probably the best course, since Krshiklla doesn't know the giants' timetable. The restaurant is open for business until dinner on the third day, which is reserved for the food critics and a few selected local dignitaries. Even these guests are not allowed in the dining room until the main course is ready (that is, until it is too late for the grippli, if they haven't been rescued). The chefs want very fresh frog legs to serve to their guests, so the grippli won't be harmed until the evening of the third day.

When the food critics arrive, Krshiklla (alerted by the scouts) knows that the time for action is near. She summons 14 of the fiercest grippli warriors and waits for the best time to attack (see "Concluding the Adventure").

Starting the Adventure

The adventure begins as the party is traveling through a forest one evening. Read the following to the players:

> A stooped, gray figure steps out into the moonlight. Though her voice is garbled, her words are understandable:
>
> "Please, I need your aid tonight. My grandchildren were taken by huge, wicked beings. You must save them from a terrible fate."

> You find yourself looking into the face of the oldest person you have ever seen. Her head is bundled, and you can barely see her features Her skin is bumpy and gray, nearly green, and her eyes have an odd cast.

If the party is willing to listen, Krshiklla briefly recounts the information in the Adventure Background. She believes the children are caged in the kitchen. She offers a reward for the children's safe return, and tells the PCs that the giants have a great deal of "shiny objects" (as observed by the grippli scouts). Druids, rangers, and those who follow nature-oriented powers may have a strong feeling (40% chance) that they should pursue this task. If the PCs are interested in the adventure, read the following to them:

> The old woman smiles and beckons with her hand toward the woods. Come out, brothers, sisters, children: show yourselves."
>
> As she waves her hands, small figures move out of hiding into the clearing. As they come forward, you can see that they are frog-like people.
>
> "We are grippli, a peaceful folk of the woods. If you fulfill your task, you do a great service to the whole tribe, and we will never forget it."

Krshiklla (grippli tribe mother) INT high; AC 7; MV 9, leap 15; HD 3; hp 14; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1; SA –3 to surprise, staff; SD musk cloud; MR nil; SZ S (4' tall); ML 12 (18 if young are in danger); XP 270; *MM*/180.

Krshiklla is 450 years old, middle-aged for a grippli. She is dressed in a gray robe in order to observe activities in town secretly. She wears a knife on her belt and carries a short, twisted rosewood staff. This is actually a *staff of swarming insects.* Krshiklla uses it mainly to feed her tribe during droughts, but she uses it in combat if necessary. The *staff* is almost fully charged (40 charges). If threatened, she can generate a musk cloud that functions as a *stinking cloud* spell.

Krshiklla's statistics are given here not for combat but for the DM's use in case the party is unsuccessful. Statistics for the grippli tribe are not supplied, since combat with them is not anticipated. Statistics for the captured grippli appear later in the adventure.

Krshiklla can offer the PCs a *ring of chameleon power,* five blowguns crafted from rare woods (worth 100 gp each), 10 uncut gemstones (worth 10–100 gp each, but a PC with gemcutting proficiency can raise that value to 100–1000 gp each), several large, juicy ants (considered a grippli delicacy), and a trove of rare fruits, flowers, and herbs worth 400 gp contained in a *bag of holding.* This is all the tribe has to offer; there is no bargaining. Krshiklla prefers not to elaborate on the nature of the reward but simply to give the party gifts at the successful conclusion of the adventure. She would rather think the party is acting out of goodwill rather than material greed. If the PCs insist, she describes the items.

If the PCs accept this mission, Krshiklla guides the party to the scout's camp near the giants' restaurant. If they refuse to accept the task, the remainder of their journey through the woods is quite unpleasant: PCs feel that they are being watched, shadows seem ominous, and no forest dweller aids them if they need help during their journey.

For The Dungeon Master

To fulfill their mission, the PCs must decide how to infiltrate the giant's kitchen. The period of time leading up to the dinner is one of frenzied activity. The chefs do not leave the restaurant during this time although they do send their wine steward to the market for supplies.

The chefs highly resent intrusion into their kitchen. Even restaurant patrons who venture inside face a barrage of insults, including but not limited to: "Va-t-en, cochon!" ("Out, swine!"); "You barbarous fools!"; "Out of the kitchen, mud-foot!"; "You make zee soufflé fall, we cut off your head! The giants attack all intruders (see the giants' descriptions for details), including restaurant patrons who are undeterred by the insults. If they appear to be well matched, the chefs may negotiate with the PCs; however, if the chefs become enraged they fight at +1 to hit, +2 to non-weapon damage, and as if their morale scores were 20 for 1d10 rounds. Use this criteria for any character who is described as enraged throughout the adventure.

The Scout's Camp

The grippli scouts who keep watch on the restaurant set up camp by two small ponds (actually giant's footprints that have filled with rainwater. There are 2d4 young grippli here at all times

(statistics for them are located under "The Cage" section described later). These grippli do not fight unless directly threatened or until their captive brothers and sisters attempt an escape. There is little cover here for anyone over 3' tall, so humans and even demi-humans should not want to remain longer than needed to get information. The scouts tell the PCs that the giants have not left the restaurant for two days, but the Ugly One (the grippli name for the giants' half-ogre mage wine steward) runs out to the market or the garden frequently. From their observations the grippli feel that time is running short and they advise the PCs to travel on to the restaurant. The grippli also warn the PCs about the vicious Great Frogs of the Hollow, a rival tribe that competes with the grippli for insects, hunting rights, and territory. These beasts are not a particularly vicious group of giant frogs; they just seem that way to the much smaller grippli.

The Great Frogs of the Hollow

The Hollow is a group of massive, rotted-out tree stumps in a small glade not far from the giants' restaurant. These are the frogs that the giants were seeking when they went out leg hunting. The brothers have never actually seen giant frogs and unfortunately for the grippli, the giants spotted them first. The giant frogs live in and around the hollow stumps, spending their days dominating and eating virtually anything smaller than themselves. These frogs are particularly large for their breed, but they do not possess the evil intelligence that the grippli seem to think they have (although they are aggressive and cannibalistic).

Giant Frogs (10): INT non-; AL nil; AC 7; MV 3, swim 9; HD 2-3; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1–3/1–6/2–8; SA tongue, swallow whole; SZ M (5–6' long); XP 270; *MM*/119.

Chez Grands Frères (The House of the Big Brothers)

The restaurant is a huge stone building with two stories and a lower level. Hedges and bushes of tall rainbow chard (greens growing in a vivid array of colors) surround the building. The chefs plan to roast the frog legs with this chard, so when the kitchen staff goes out to harvest this vegetable, it indicates that the grippli are about to be cooked. The 30' tall wooden doors at the entrance are locked at night. Forcing them open requires a combined total of 35 Strength points and creates a loud noise that alerts the inhabitants.

Inside the Restaurant

The dining room staff consists of three waitresses and a wine steward. The waitresses wear too much makeup and frilly gowns, neither of which do much to improve their appearance since they are kobolds. They wait only on smaller guests (humans and the like). Brummel the half ogre mage wine steward waits on giant guests.

Brummel came to the brothers as an apprentice cook and developed a keen interest in wines and spirits through their tutelage. He is quite a connoisseur of fine wines and always expects restaurant patrons to accept his suggestions. Brummel is distinguished from other half-ogres by displaying some ogre mage qualities.

Brummel has bluish-tinged skin and ivory horns. He has black hair, black nails trimmed short, and black eyes with white pupils. Brummel wears a chainmail shirt under his white uniform and always wears white gloves. Giants don't usually associate with ogres, but the brothers thought that by hiring Brummel, they might impress Yan, a famous ogre mage hibachi chef. Brummel is masterful at running the restaurant. Always trying to cultivate his latent magical abilities, he keeps a diary that includes a few spell scrolls in his room. He only uses these spells to enhance the atmosphere in the restaurant, not in combat.

Brummel routinely uses his flying ability to get around the large kitchen. Sometimes he casts *cone of cold* to renew the ice in the cold cellar. He also may use this spell in combat as a last resort (the cold could break the fine glassware in the dining room and freeze the food being prepared in the kitchen). Brummel is a savvy opponent for the PCs when they try to liberate the grippli, even if he doesn't realize their intentions. One task he takes extremely seriously is keeping restaurant patrons out of the kitchen. He is very proud of helping the giants keep a clean kitchen, and he doesn't want any slovenly guests dirtying it up with their muddy feet, unkempt hair, and unwashed hands. If he finds just one or two PCs snooping around the kitchen, he uses his *sleep* spell. If a battle goes badly for himself or the giants, he tries to get far enough away from the fray to use his *invisibility*, then returns to fight unseen. He insists that the kitchen and dining room be kept immaculate and does not tolerate any interfering PCs barging into the kitchen. His favorite tactic is to dump offending intruders down the large garbage chutes unceremoniously (see the "Otyugh Cave" section below to find out where they land).

On the afternoon of the second day, the chefs send Brummel to the market for fresh baby carrots and a few other supplies. Just before sunset on the third day, he goes out to harvest the rainbow chard. At all other times, he is inside the restaurant. He meditates in his room for a short period each afternoon, and sleeps lightly for a few hours each night.

Brummel: (male half-ogre mage) INT exceptional; AL LE; AC 3; MV 12; HD 2+6; hp 16; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2–8 (weapon); SZ L (8' tall); ML 14 (16 see below); SA spells; SD spells; XP 350; *MM*/273–274.

Spells and magical abilities: *fly* (for 12 turns), *invisibility, charm person, cone of cold, sleep* (he can perform the latter three once per day).

The waitresses names are Francine, Chapponage, and Amortisseuse. By kobold standards, they are quite intelligent and pretty, and this makes them haughty. They refuse to wait on gnomes but do not attack their racial foes on sight. All three speak common. The wine steward hired them as wait staff because he thought that their high intelligence (for kobolds) made them good subjects for the ability-enhancing experiments that he plans. He hopes that such experiments will help him uncover his own latent ogre mage abilities.

If provoked, the waitresses attack using anything resembling a weapon close at hand. Their favorite weapons are the huge ironstone platters that they use to carry food and plates to and from the kitchen. These platters cause 1d6 hp damage.

Kobold Waitresses (3): INT high; AL LE; AC 7; MV 6; HD ½; hp 4, 3, 2; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon (see below); SZ S (3' tall); ML 8; XP 7; *MM*/214.

1. The Dining Room. A huge crystal chandelier, lit with a *continual light* spell from Brummel's scrolls, is sus-

pended by a silk-wrapped steel chain from the ceiling. The chain is secured on a hook so that the chandelier may be raised and lowered for cleaning. The chandelier is worth about 15,000 gp, but is very hard to transport. Removing and packing the chandelier takes about four hours, and the brittle glass buttons and drops are likely to break. The arms of the chandelier are each 4' long, making the chandelier itself 10' in diameter.

There are 12 tables in all. The head table is set directly below the chandelier and seats 10 giant-sized guests. Three long tables seat 10 human-sized guests each, while the other eight tables seat four humans each. The tables are set with linen napkins and heavy silver candlesticks (worth 75 gp each), except the head table, which has a large crystal candelabrum (800 gp). At night, the chefs like to dim the chandelier and let the guests dine by candlelight.

The human-sized tables are set with heavily carved silver mother-of-pearl handled flatware (25 gp each piece; 128 total pieces) and bone china painted with dark blue and gold (30–80 gp each piece; 62 total pieces). Each place is set with heavy cut crystal water and wine glasses (40 gp each; 62 total pieces). The head table is bare. On the third day, Brummel begins setting this table with special large-size tableware for the giant guests.

The centerpiece for the head table is a huge pyramid of sugared fruits. The fruits rest on five glass cake stands, each smaller than the previous one. If the display is disturbed in any way, the whole thing comes tumbling down.

There is a large lacquer cabinet with many drawers along the wall. The family silver is stored here. This huge, heavy, and ornate flatware edged in gold is worth 2,000 gp for the set (there are 48 pieces). One wall is lined with tall glass-doored cabinets that contain the giants' crystal stemware (150 gp each; 144 pieces), decanters (600 gp each; 24 decanters), gold leaf china set (4,000 gp for the set; 40 pieces), and the brothers' collection of gaudy porcelain figurines (800 each). The six figurines are life-size (for humans) and intricate.

A small fireplace is set into one corner of the room. Instead of burning on the floor, the firepit is built at about waist level on the bricked corner inset. A tiled counter in front of the fire serves as a warm site for hors d'oeuvres.

Zee Dinner is Served!

Use this section if the PCs decide to dine at the restaurant in order to obtain more information about the giants. During the three days, there are few guests other than the PCs. The locals know that the giants are in a frenzy over the critics' arrival, and they are avoiding the place. Any other guests in the restaurant quietly leave when trouble begins. The DM should feel free to improvise this encounter.

If the PCs decide to enter the dining room, read the following:

> As you enter the dining room, you see a huge, glittering chandelier and many beautifully set tables. A female kobold immediately summons you to one of the smaller tables. "Ave a zeet, ave a zeet," she cries. She is swathed in silks and lipstick, and she speaks common.
>
> "I am Francine, at your zerveece." She hands one of you a very large piece of curled parchment.
>
> "Select from zee menu, and zee sommelier will elp you shooze a fine wine." She waits, tapping her elegantly shod foot while you look at the menu.

If the party decides that the prices are too high, Francine calls for Brummel to throw them out.

If the PCs order, Francine takes their order to the kitchen as Brummel approaches their table. He does not bring a wine list, and he bristles noticeably if anyone asks for one. He suggests a wine based on each order. (The DM should choose one of the wines listed in the cellar described in area **18** for each order. Wines are sold by the half-carafe and cost 1d20 gp each). If a PC doesn't want wine, Brummel politely offers a selection of flavored mineral waters (which cost the same as wine). If anyone refuses his suggestion, he turns red in the face, appears to swell in size, and shouts "Zat is zee proper wine! There ees no other wine for you!" If the PC still refuses his suggestion, he uses his *charm person* ability. If this fails, he tries throwing the offenders out of the restaurant. The moment a PC accepts his suggested wine, he immediately nods and smiles a toothy smile. "Tres bien, monsieur/madame." He goes to the cellar, fetches the appropriate wine, and lets the PC sniff the cork before decanting it. If the PC finds anything wrong with the wine, Brummel goes through the same contortions as described above.

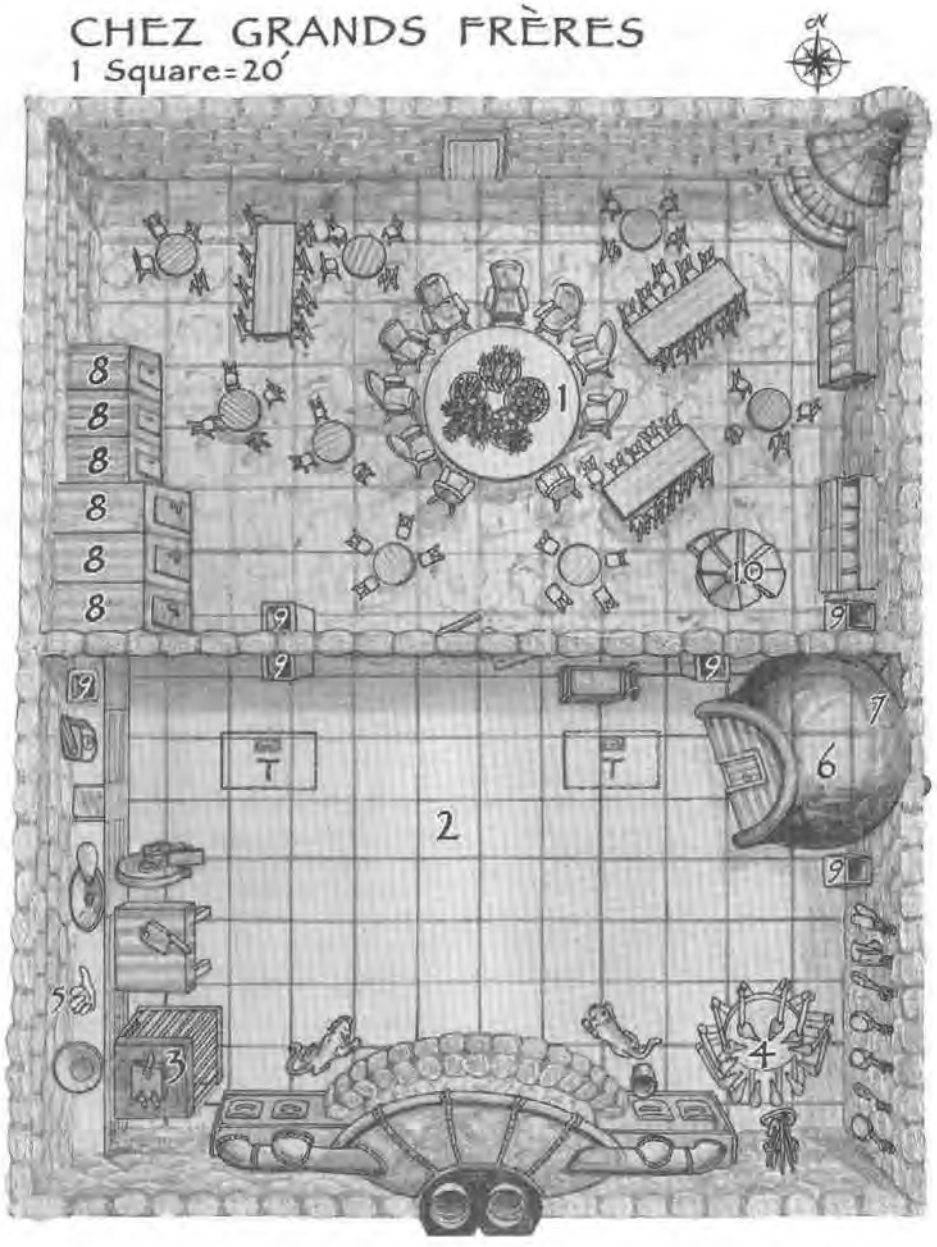
Le Menu Chez Grands Frères	
Bouillabaisse 'a la Ante Ju'li (shellfish stew)	3 gp
Quiche Anchoise (anchovy and cheese pastry)	5 gp
Oeufs de Cockatrice (deviled goose eggs in hot sauce)	5 gp
Foie de Catoblepas (Catoblepas liver)	12 gp
Cervelles au Beurre Noir (Calves' brains with black butter)	15 gp
Langue de Boeuf (beef tongue)	10 gp
Entrements et Gâteaux (desserts and cakes)	4 gp

Amortisseuse brings out platters of food, carrying them on her back, and Chapponage clears the tables when the PCs finish. She also counts the tableware, making sure that the PCs haven't stolen any. If anything is missing, she screams for Brummel.

2. The Kitchen. Huge glass lamps lit by *continual light* spells hang by chains from the ceiling. There are two doors from the dining room to the kitchen. Each door swings both directions. If Brummel is serving, characters standing near the doors have a 25% chance of being hit (2–8 hp damage, as Brummel moves quickly and forcefully). Just inside the doors is Brummel's butler's cart. It is a large cart that Brummel and the waitresses use to move food into the dining room to be served. Currently, it is groaning with a huge selection of desserts. If anyone disturbs the desserts, Brummel flies into a rage and attacks.

A roaring fire warms the kitchen. The deep fireplace is set into the far stone wall. A large metal hood over the fire reduces smoke. Four ovens are built into the stone and are heated by the fire. A large black cauldron sits in the coals, and a roasting spit is set over the fire. Nearby is a coal bucket and shovel, a broom, a dustpan, and several sharp pokers and ornamental skewers. (These are sized for giants and can function as polearms. Use statistics for the bec de corbin in the *PHB*).

A pair of andirons support the logs in the fire. These iron dog statuettes are actually miniature iron golems.



They can separate from the stands when called upon. They have most of the magical abilities of full-sized iron golems but are less powerful.

Firedogs (2): INT non-; AL N; AC 3; MV 6; HD 12; hp 20; THAC0 10; #AT 1d10; SA breathe poisonous gas once every 7 rounds in 10' cube directly in front (gas dissipates in one round first three uses, after that, gas no longer dissipates due to enclosed space; SD immune to all forms of poison and mind-based spells, immune to any weapon except +3 or greater, magical fire repairs 1 hp damage for each it would have caused; SZ 2' tall; ML 19; XP 3,000; *MM*/166.

The firedogs were a gift to the brothers' great aunt, Ju'li Yachild, from a wizard admirer. They animate to attack on the commands "Fee" and "Foe." They stop attacking on the words "Fie" and "Fum." The firedogs lack the exceptional Strength of normal iron golems.

3. The Cage. Close to the fireplace is a large wire cage locked with a 1' square padlock (the 8"-long key is in the pantry, described below). The 10 captive grippli are held inside. Next to their cage is a chopping block, a knife sharpening wheel, and a large cleaver. Normally nonaggressive, these humanoid frogs are angry and want to fight the restaurant's inhabitants when they are freed. They especially hate the kobold waitresses for taunting them. The PCs should try to keep the grippli moving along to get them out safely.

Grippli INT very to high; AL N; AC 9; MV 9, leap 15; HD 1+1; hp 3–7; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1–4 (weapon); SA –3 to opponents' surprise; SD nil; MR nil; SZ S (2 ½' tall); ML 14 (due to their enraged state, normal ML is 8–10); XP 65; *MM*/180.

These frog-people have human-like hands and grasping feet. If freed, they grab giant knives and forks to use like spears. The grippli language is composed of groans, clicks, squeaks, and croaks. Thlkkgra, their leader, speaks common.

Thlkkgra (Grippli leader): INT high; AC 8; HD 2; hp 9; see above for other statistics.

Thlkkgra knows that two members of his party escaped and he has been expecting a rescue. He is extremely excited when the PCs arrive. He is so outraged by the capture that the PCs have to convince him that the best course is, if possible, to escape quickly and not stay to fight everyone in the restaurant. He is quite intelligent, though, and soon realizes that they must escape. If a quick getaway isn't possible, Thlkkgra works with the PCs on formulating traps or ambushes. As quick learners and keen observers, the grippli have a good understanding of the basic workings of the mechanical and magical devices in the kitchen.

A long counter runs along the left wall. This space is used for preparing food. One of the spaces is a metal plate used for grilling. The command words for this hot plate are "chauffe," to heat it enough for cooking, and "refroide," to cool it off. The brothers usually forget the latter, so it stays hot most of the time. There is also a waterclock on the counter. At given times, a *magic mouth* bellows from the clock "Take me out before I burn!" If combat occurs in the kitchen, this alarm is 50% likely to go off during the fighting. In this case, the DM should make an Intelligence check for Prue. If he fails, he leaves the fighting to check the ovens and the grill. In the middle of the counter is a deep sink filled with water. Its faucet is actually a *decanter of endless water* that can be removed simply by unscrew-

ing it from the sink. Next to the sink is a dish with a huge bar of hard lye soap. When the grippli are free they jump into the sink because the roaring fire has dried their skin.

Below the counter are many drawers, containing all manner of giant-sized kitchen implements. Listed below are the contents of the drawers:

❖ 30 candles of varying shapes, colors, and sizes (for creating dining atmosphere).

❖ 10 sharp paring knives and forks. (The grippli have seen the chefs open this drawer, and it is the first thing that they go for when freed, use statistics for short swords and stilettos in the *PHB*.)

❖ Implements including a garlic press, pasta makers, whisks, cookie cutters, carrot peelers, and an item the brothers call their eggbeater of death. This is not a magical item, but it can be very dangerous. It is 5' long and operates by turning a gear. The sharp heads of the eggbeater whir together to whip omelettes or cake mixes into a froth, but used offensively the eggbeater causes 3d8 hp damage. Only someone of 19+ Strength can operate the eggbeater quickly enough to cause this much damage, though. Use by someone of normal Strength causes 1d6 hp damage.

On top of the counter sits an effective foil for the eggbeater, a *colander of endless escarole*. This huge *colander* (4' in diameter) is always filled with salad greens. It's a convenience for the giants, but it has other uses. When aimed at a target, it shoots out salad greens that cause no damage but nullify the eggbeater attacks and reduce other attack damage by half. If aimed down for two rounds, it reduces falling damage in that area by three quarters.

The right wall is set with hooks that hold copper pots and pans, and the chefs caps and aprons. Some of these are magical in nature, including a pair of *oven mits of fire resistance*. These function as the ring of the same name described in the *DMG*/148. Hanging on one of the hooks is a large wooden spoon. This is actually a dangerous magical item, the *dreaded spoon of transmuting flesh to roquefort*, (see sidebar) which can turn a PC into cheese. Prue uses it against the most obviously threatening PC by waving the spoon and shouting "Roquefort!" Anyone affected by the *spoon* is taken into the wine cellar. The brothers are currently out of that variety of cheese. The affected PC must be rescued within 48 hours or he ends up on the restaurant's menu.

4. Automatic Cake Decorator. In one corner of the room is an unusual device invented by Prue. This is an automatic giant cake decorator, and it is still in the development stage. When an object is placed on the pressure plate (or someone steps on or falls against it), a padded iron band snaps securely around the object (the bands cause no damage, but a PC must roll a Bend Bars/Lift Gates check to escape) to hold it in place while 10 metal arms work around the object, spraying it with different flavors of icing in a variety of patterns. This process takes 1d6 rounds and leaves the affected PC functioning at –4 Dexterity until the iced hearts and flowers are all removed, which takes another 1d4 rounds.

5. Helping Hand Golem. This clay golem variant was also created by a friend of the brothers' aunt. The golem is shaped like a giant hand that wears a white rubber glove with a big smiling

The Dreaded Spoon of Transmuting Flesh to Roquefort

This item creates a spell-effect similar to that produced by the spell *flesh to stone* (the reverse of *stone to flesh*), except the affected person turns into a statue of roquefort cheese instead of stone. The effect is reversible by waving the spoon and shouting "Passé!" If any of the cheese from the statue is broken off, consumed, etc., the missing parts may be replaced by additional roquefort cheese sculpted to resemble the original. In this case, no damage occurs to the person transformed by the spoon. But if cheese is removed without being replaced, the victim suffers damage proportional to the amount missing when they are transformed back. For example, if half the cheese was eaten, the victim loses half his hit points. The hp loss occurs only when the victim is restored to flesh. If some other kind of cheese is used as a replacement, the victim suffers a loss of 1d4 Dexterity points upon transformation. These points may be restored by a *heal* or *regeneration* spell.

Prue has been using the *spoon* on hapless goats to create roquefort, out of the mistaken impression that roquefort is a goat cheese. Fortunately, the *dreaded spoon* has only three remaining charges.

face on the palm. It is a little shorter than most clay golems, but wider. The hand can grasp objects, people, or monsters. The brothers use this golem for kitchen tasks and for waiting on special guests (other giants). It moves by swishing itself back and forth on the sides of the hand, which function like clumsy feet. Its long service in kitchens and its slight intelligence (it has the intelligence of a flesh golem rather than a clay golem) has left it with an understanding of some of the menial tasks, like cleaning and stirring, so it does these tasks automatically. It can follow the simple instructions of the chefs. Unlike other lesser golems, it is accustomed to using kitchen implements and can readily wield them in combat. It avoids hot areas like the stove and fireplace.

Helping hand clay golem: INT semi-; AL N; AC 7; MV 7; HD 11; hp 50; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 3–30; SA strength, berserk rage; SD spell, weapon resistance; MR nil; SZ L (5' tall, 4 ½' wide); ML 20; XP 5,000; *MM*/167.

Like other clay golems, the helping hand has a strength of 20 for lifting, throwing, or smashing objects. It can be struck only by magical blunt weapons. *Move earth* drives it back only 20' but inflicts 3–36 hp damage. Other spell effects are the same as listed in the *Monstrous Manual*™ tome. The elemental spirit of this golem has a greater chance than normal (3% instead of 1% per round) to break free of control. If this occurs, in its berserk rage it first attacks kitchen equipment, the objects of its slavery. The rampage causes 5d10 hp damage distributed among everyone in the kitchen (not including the golem), as they are hit by flying implements and hot grease. There is no way to regain control of the golem if it goes berserk. This golem was made to obey the master chef of the kitchen. If anything happens to Pol, Prue, or Brummel, the golem obeys the person whose clothing most resembles a chef's outfit.

The giants remain in the kitchen for the most of the adventure, except for a few hours each night when they restlessly try to sleep in their rooms; and for half an hour each morning when they take their daily swim in the cool waters of Lac Anchois.

The Cloud Giant Brothers (2): INT high; AL CN; AC 0; MV 15; HD 16+2-7 hp; THAC0 5; #AT 1; Dmg 1–10 or by weapon (6–24 +11); SA hurl pots and pans for 1–12 hp damage; SD surprised only on 1; MR nil; SZ H (19' tall); ML 18; XP 10,000; *MM*/132.

Both brothers wear white chef's hats and aprons. The giants skin is light blue and they have brass-colored hair and dark blue eyes. They are short for cloud giants and quite sensitive about it.

Poularde Dhomme hp 70.

Pol is quite rotund (he weighs 11,000 lbs.) and has overly long arms. This makes his reach unusually long, (15') even for a cloud giant. His hat is taller than Prue's, signifying that he is the master chef. In combat, Pol wields his *cleaver +2*. There is a 10% chance at any time that Pol uses the eggbeaters of death in his food preparation. If so, he wields these in combat. Pol also commands the firedogs to attack intruders. Poularde did not realize at first that the grippli were anything more than oversized frogs. When he discovered that they were intelligent beings, he decided that they were simply inferior creatures serving their natural purpose. If the PCs try to negotiate for the release of the grippli, Pol listens but is unlikely to be swayed. In order for him to consider giving up the grippli, the PCs would have to give him an alternate source for the frog leg dish (such as the giant frogs described earlier), plus help in the dining room (he is worried about the impression that kobold waitresses will leave on the critics). If the PCs make these offers, there is a 75% chance that Pol agrees (50% for the food, 25% for the help). If any PC mentions the large ants that the grippli offered as a reward, he becomes fixated on the idea of serving large chocolate-covered ants for desert and may agree to trade the grippli for them (the chance that the ants alone sway his opinion is 25%). Poularde is fascinated by magical items and has made a practice of collecting ones that may help him in his career as a chef. A PC offering him a food-related magic item increases the chance of Pol's acquiescing by an additional 20%. If the PCs damage anything in his kitchen, he decides that they must be destroyed instantly.

Pruneaux Dhomme hp 62.

Prue has a slightly sloping forehead and is particularly sensitive to comments about it. He nearly killed the grippli when they began taunting him about his looks. Pol had to restrain him in order to save their main course. Prue is very reluctant to let the grippli go. He understands that they are intelligent but he wants revenge for their taunting. If Pol seems interested in setting the grippli free, Prue argues with him and tries to eliminate the source of trouble (the PCs). But if Prue sees the giant frogs, he changes his mind immediately (they are so much juicier looking than those skinny little grippli) and demands that Pol accept the exchange. If he or the sanctity of his kitchen is threatened, Prue grabs his *dreaded spoon* and tries to turn the PCs into cheese. He also calls on the helping hand to attack. Even though Pruneaux isn't usually as sharp as his brother Poularde, when it comes to mechanical creations, he is a bit of a genius (a tinker gnome genius, that is). He has been perfecting his automatic cake decorator for years and is very protective of it. If anyone should break his precious machine, he vows revenge.

6. Dry Storage Room. This room contains all the food that can't be

stored in the damp cellars. A tall spice rack contains bottles of every imaginable herb and spice. Barrels are used to store rice, flour, wheat, and dried fruits and vegetables. Nearby are large vegetables such as gourds and pumpkins. Small casks hold candied fruits and herbs. Jellies, marmalades, and a variety of sweeteners are kept in jars. Heavy crocks hold pickled items of all kinds: pears, cucumbers, beets, cabbage, goose eggs, and mangoes. A mahogany tea caddy is filled with exotic teas (150 gp) and ceramic canisters hold coffee beans. There is a mill for grinding the coffee. The most valuable items are a mother-of-pearl box containing caviar (200 gp), a small wooden chest filled with truffles (175 gp), and six tins of foie gras (65 gp/tin). There is a huge barrel of salted anchovies, or anchois, served in honor of the town.

7. The Haunted Pantry. The pantry is actually a large stone vat, upended and sealed with wooden slats, into which a door has been cut for access. This vat is an important part of the brothers' family history. It is haunted by the ghost of the most famous chef of the family, the brothers' great aunt, Ju'li Yachild.

Ju'li died when she accidentally fell into a large vat of bouillabaisse. Now as a ghost, haunting the same vat, she gets along fairly well with her grandnephews — she doesn't try to kill or age them, but she nags them incessantly. The brothers brought her vat with them when they moved to Lac Anchois because they believe she is a good guardian for their treasures — and because it was the only way she would let them see her recipes. Ju'li has a yearning for someone in her family to be a truly great chef (her nephews haven't fit the bill, in her opinion). This desire is so strong that if she meets someone with a high proficiency in cooking (20% chance per slot, extra 10% for good role-playing) she is instantly friendly and tries to give the character her cookbook. With less talented strangers, however, she behaves much the same as a normal ghost, albeit a giant-sized one. Although her features are only semi-materialized, it is obvious that some of her close relatives were hill giants. She isn't bothered by anyone's observations on this point. She chooses the tallest PC for her *magic jar* attack.

The ghost of Great Aunt Ju'li Yachild: INT high; AL LE; AC 0 (semi-materialized) or 8 (on the Ethereal plane); MV 9; HD 10; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg age 10–40 years; SA *magic jar,* age (subject to her control); SD silver or magic weapons only or ethereal; MR nil; SZ H (24' tall); ML see below; XP 7,000; *MM*/130.

Inside this locked pantry lies the chefs' deepest secret: a dusty, battered volume titled *Great Aunt Ju'li Yachild's Favorite Recipes.* The brothers live in fear that the public will discover that their fabulous recipes are not their own original creations, but they cannot destroy the volume because their ghostly aunt won't let them. Besides the cookbook, the pantry contains many of the brothers' other treasures. These include a *bottle of preservation* and a *bottle of trapping* (see *Encyclopedia Magica*™ pages 200–210, but these bottles are 5' tall), an *elixir of health,* and three *potions of fire resistance.* A red velvet bag holds rare morel mushrooms (300 gp) and several ounces of saffron contained in a small gold jewel-encrusted box (500 gp). The brothers monetary treasure lies in leather bags on the floor of the pantry. It includes 97 gp, 228 sp, 67 cp, and 50 giant gold pieces worth 4 gp each. The key to the grippli cage hangs on a hook in the pantry.

8. The Powder Rooms. These six rooms are individual cubicles for either men or women. Three are built for giants and three for shorter folk. Each has a bowl of rosewater for washing, as well as the usual facilities, and each locks from the inside. If the PCs use the powder rooms they experience a vague sense of unease caused by faint telepathic emanations from the neo-otyugh that resides in the cave below (see area **19**). The facilities are built directly over the cave, but the cave is so deep that the powder rooms are fairly fresh smelling. Some of the guests refer to this area as "the magic rooms."

9. Garbage Chutes These 10' square chutes are built into the walls and cabinets all around the kitchen and dining room. Pol is a cleaning fanatic and insists that every scrap is swept away (not an easy task for the kobold waitresses). The chutes drop straight into area **19** below.

10. Spiral Staircase This huge stone stairway connects the upper and main floors.

Upper Level

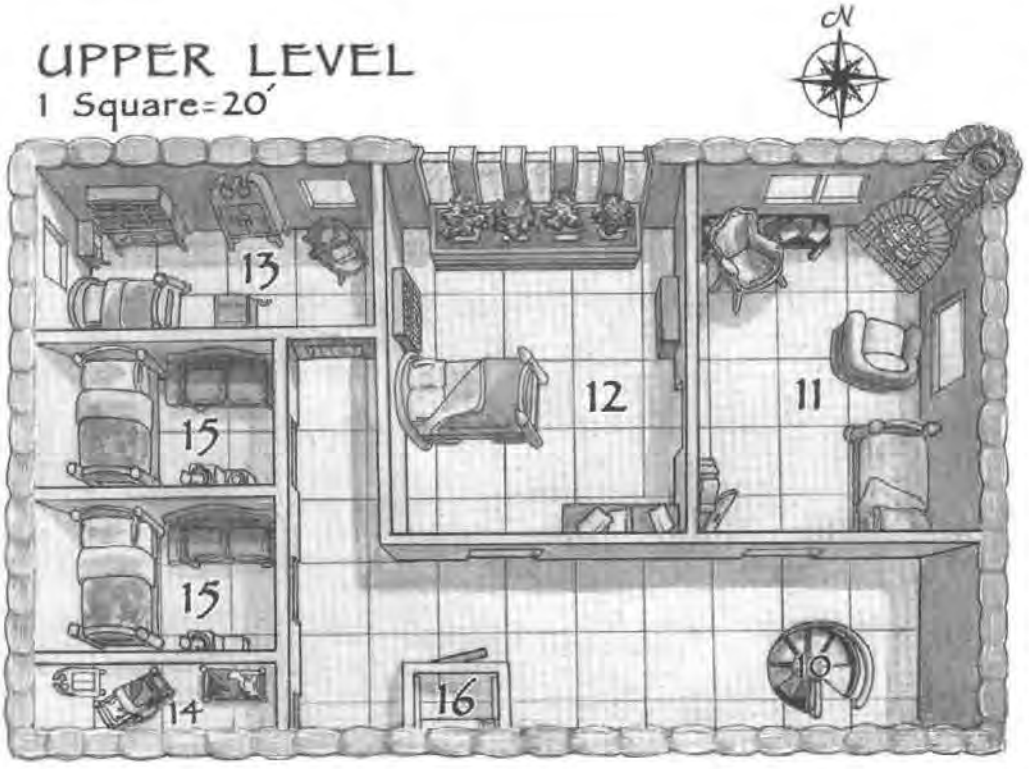
The giants are in their rooms for only a few hours on the nights leading up to their big dinner.

11. Prue's Room This room contains a fireplace (Prue likes the warmth). There are several velvet-upholstered, overstuffed chairs here and a long, black glass table covered with books about cake decorating. All the furniture is giant-sized. Prue's gaudy clothes are strewn about the room. His five velvet and silk outfits are worth 50–100 gp each for the cloth alone.

12. Pol's Room. This room's many long windows and skylights provide sunlight for Pol's collection of miniature fruit trees. The trees sit on a long table. They are kept at dwarf size through *reduce* spells (from Brummel's book) and trimming and transplanting the roots. The trees bear miniature lemons, apples, plums, and cherries which Pol uses for flavoring. Brummel has actually been doing most of the work involved with caring for these trees. Pol's room has few other features save for a bed with white silk sheets. There are several good books written by master chefs, worth 25–200 gp to a collector or another chef. The books are very large, ranging from 2–8' long. Poularde likes to consider himself an ascetic, indulging only in good food and wine. This room is spotlessly clean.

13. Brummel's Room. This room is extremely tidy, and the furnishings are simple but expensive and well cared-for. A bookshelf contains a series of beautifully bound books. These seven volumes contain Brummel's memoirs to date. The writing is extremely dull, but his comments on wine are insightful. Interspersed in the volumes are a few low level spell scrolls, including *continual light, reduce,* and *cantrip.* The books also detail his experiments aimed at increasing the kobold waitresses' intelligence. (The experiments consist of making the kobolds memorize trivia about wine and food preparation). Brummel is present in this room at night and for about an hour in the afternoon. He rises at dawn to stoke the fires.

14. Waitress' Quarters. This room is a mess. Filmy scarves, gowns, and cosmetic bottles are strewn around. The room smells as if several bottles of different kinds of cheap perfume have



been spilled here, yet the underlying scent of damp dogs permeates the air. Since the waitresses are paid in fripperies, the only treasures here are five bottles of perfume (10 gp each), 10 thin gold bangles (3 gp each), and 16 gauzy silk scarves in brilliant colors (5 gp each). If the waitresses catch anyone stealing their belongings, they fight viciously and scream for Brummel.

15. Guest Quarters. These rooms are furnished in rather unattractive lime green upholstery. Each room contains a giant-sized bed, a small sofa, a wash-stand, and a vase of wilting flowers. These rooms are ideal for the PCs to hide in because no one comes in here until the giant guests arrive on the afternoon of the third day.

16. Linen Closet. This closet holds thick wash towels, linen tea towels, sturdy cotton towels for the kitchen, lace tablecloths (30 gp each), and bed sheets. The shelves are 4' high and 8' wide and are spaced 5' apart. Smaller PCs could easily hide in among the linen.

The Cellars

Two trapdoors lead down to the cellars. Both have bolt locks that can be drawn from the inside or the outside. Each cellar has steps leading up to a trapdoor, and a door connects the two cellars.

17. The Cold Cellar. The walls of this cellar are lined with ice. The steps leading down from the trapdoor are slippery. Each PC must make a Dexterity check to avoid falling, and thus taking 1d4 hp damage. Due to the depth of this cellar, the ice stays fairly cold naturally, but the temperature is kept low due to the presence of an ice toad.

Ice Toad: AC 4; MV 9, hop 9; HD 5; hp 30 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 3–12; SA radiate cold for 3–18 hp damage; ML 11; AL N; *MM*/345.

This creature is occupied with several frozen giant insects that the brothers caught for it. It attacks only if surprised. Anyone falling down the steps is 50% likely to be attacked.

Alongside the wall is an iceblock that contains a frozen alligator. The brothers imported this beast from the south. The iceblock has not frozen solidly into the wall and may fall if disturbed. Anyone touching the block has a 25% chance of accidentally dislodging it. If anyone is below the block when it is dislodged, there is a 25% chance that they are hit. PCs hit by the block suffer 2d10 hp damage. Dislodging the block causes the ice toad to attack.

There are several large ice chests near the steps. These chests are made of wood and lined with canvas. Each contains frozen food items.

A. This chest contains beef tongues, calves' brains, and assorted tripe.

B. This chest holds two, 2' long frozen snails.

C. This chest is filled with black pudding (the culinary kind, not the monster), left over from a holiday feast. Anyone eating this (before or after it thaws) must save vs. poison or suffer debilitating stomach pains for 4 rounds.

D. The last chest holds six catoblepas livers. These could be sold to an alchemist or sage for 150 gp each but they smell awful.

There are five hooks hanging from the ceiling. One of the hooks holds an elk, recently caught and unskinned. Another hook holds a side of beef. These hooks are actually magical *meat hooks of tenderizing* used to hold animals before cooking. The *hooks* tenderize the meat as it hangs in the cellar. After four hours of hanging, meat does not require normal tenderizing. These *hooks* could be sold to a butcher or chef for 250 gp each.

18. The Wine Cellar. This cellar contains many varieties of wines and cheeses. Its proximity to the cold cellar keeps everything here chilled, including several huge watermelons. The cheeses are giant-sized (1–8' long) loaves and wheels of all varieties. They spoil quickly if removed from the cellar without being kept cool. Also found here are 10 bottles of Calvados. This apple brandy needs another five years to age properly. Anyone drinking the Calvados suffers as if drinking poison (type I), although the smell and taste do not indicate the danger.

The brothers' wine and spirits collection also includes six bottles of aged cognac (25 gp/bottle), and a great collection of 12 bottles of rare cassis and licorice wines (15 gp/bottle). There is a tun of red house wine (35 gp), 12 magnums (a magnum contains two bottles) of very fine dry white wine (8 gp each), a hogshead (half a butt or 66 gallons) of sherry (40 gp), and a collection of sweet plum, black ruby, vanilla, and honeyed acacia wines (20 casks, 4 gp/cask). The giants are fond of port, so there are 10 giant-sized bottles of it here (25 gp each). There is a salmanazar (a container equivalent to 12 bottles) of fine

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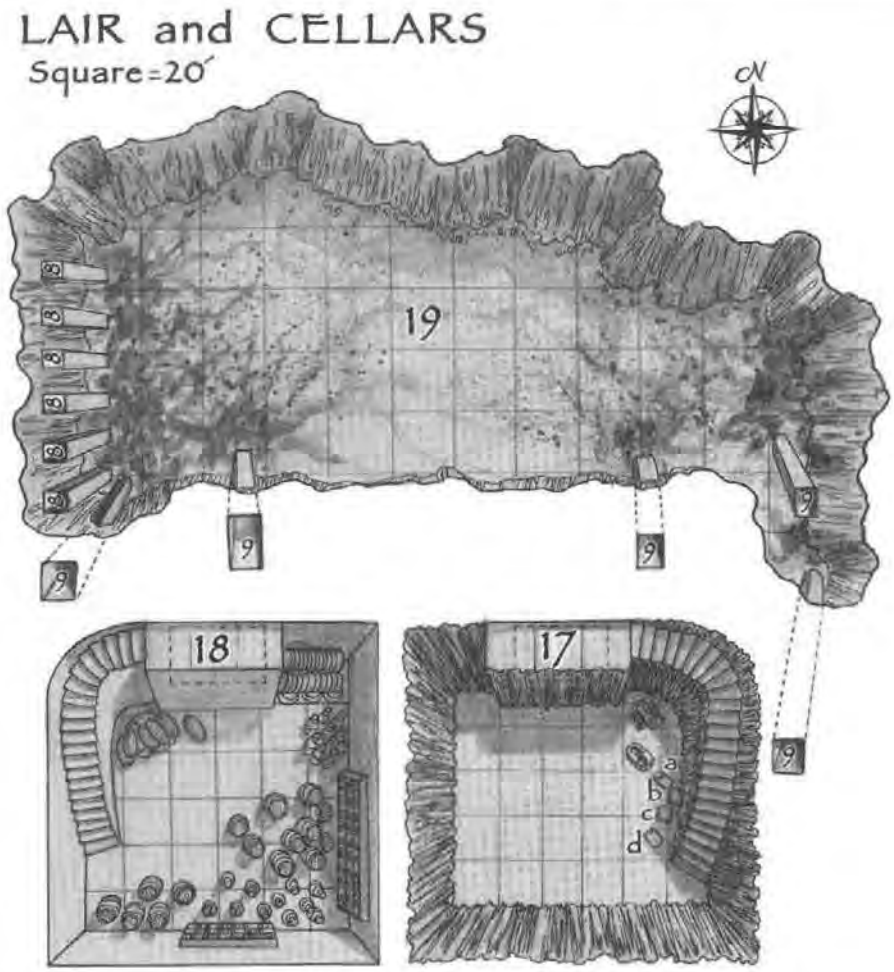

champagne (worth 250 gp) that the giants plan to use to toast their guests.

19. The Cave. This area's inhabitant, a neo-otyugh, made a pact with the brothers to protect the area from attack in exchange for the wastes generated by the restaurant.This cave extends 100' below the restaurant's main level. Wastes from the garbage chutes and the privies fall into this area, where the neo-otyugh makes its home. PCs that fall through the garbage chutes are protected from falling damage by the trash on the cave floor, but those wearing metal armor risk sinking into the garbage. Even greater is the danger from the neo-otyugh, which attacks any creature in its domain. The monster can telepathically communicate its emotions to anyone standing near the garbage chutes on the main level.

Neo-otyugh: INT very; AC 0; MV 6; HD 9; hp 45; #AT 3; Dmg 2–12/2–12/1–3; SA grab, disease; SD never surprised; SZ L (8' diameter; ML fanatic; XP 2,000; *MM*/283.

Concluding the Adventure

As stated above, Krshiklla's scouts have been observing the activity at the giant's restaurant throughout the adventure. On the evening of the third day, the giantish food critics arrive. Krshiklla realizes that this is the crucial moment. If there is no sign of the grippli escape, she senses that the mission has failed and launches an attack with 14 grippli warriors, including three large males with enhanced statistics (AC 8; HD 2; 1d4+1 dmg with poisoned weapons). Use statistics for grippli captives above for the other warriors. Krshiklla uses her musk cloud and *insect staff* in the kitchen in order to drive out the giants while she and the others rescue the grippli captives, and the PCs, if they have been captured. The stink and the insects ruin the giants' business, and they are forced to close the restaurant. Of course, they blame the party for this and seek revenge should the PCs survive.

Statistics for the giantish food critics aren't included because the party should have rescued the grippli before they arrive. However, their presence may add extra excitement (and difficulty) if the DM wants to broaden the adventure. The critics are: Yan the famous ogre mage hibachi chef; Marthala Stu'art, a frost giantess and the keeper of giantish culinary lore; and Creo Zote, a hill giant known as "the crude gourmet."

If the PCs win freedom for the grippli, whether by combat, stealth, or other means, and the majority of the creatures are unharmed, the party receives a shared story award of 10,000 XP. In addition to the story award, the PCs receive double the XP for each grippli that escapes the restaurant alive. The PCs get double the giant frogs' experience points if they capture them for the brothers, and only half for killing the giant frogs (remember, the brothers want fresh frog legs). Any PCs who help serve or prepare the giants' dinner get 200 XP each. The DM should feel free to reward the PCs for other solutions that make both giants and grippli happy. PCs get no experience points for harming the kobold waitresses, Krshiklla, or any of the other grippli. A proficient cook who wins Ju'li Yachild's cookbook receives a bonus award of 500 XP.

If the PCs resolve the problem amicably with the brothers, the giants insist on feeding them huge meals with their best, most exotic entrees. After about a few days, they allow the PCs to leave provided they take packs of "trail rations" specially prepared by the giants. After a few weeks, however, the brothers only vaguely remember the PCs, since they are planning their next big project: a barbecue.

If the grippli captives are returned safely, the whole tribe celebrates. The PCs are fed and given gifts. In the future, the PCs receive protection in the forests wherever grippli dwell. Although they are small and relatively weak, the grippli are great strategists and they cultivate allies. Since the young of this tribe usually travel to another tribe to marry, their protection extends outside this particular forest. Someday, a PC who finds trouble in a distant wood may be rescued by one of the grippli he helped save. Ω